

THE

RELIGIOUS MONITOR,

AND

EVANGELICAL REPOSITORY.

JULY, 1833.

ART. I. *Church and State, No. 3.*

"PROP. 3. God has committed the administration and execution of his law on this subject to church and state, in all ordinary cases." It is a truth, that God has committed to church and state, and *heads of families, authority* to administer and execute his law, *on all subjects and in all cases.* Neither the prevalence of crime, as in the old world and the cities of the plain, nor the secrecy of crime, ought to have been named as exceptions. These may render authority inefficient, but cannot annul it. But to what end is this proposition? Or what the use of its exceptions? It has been affirmed in my first Number—that the church may ordain censures, and of course execute them, for the enforcing of every precept of the divine law—not excepting those which are to regulate the civil ruler in the exercise of the civil function. Does the author of the REASONS mean to deny this? and to confine the church's power to cases arising out of the seventh commandment? and still further, to confine it to "all ordinary cases?" If the violation of "any of God's statutes and judgments in regard to marriage were to become general, there could be no church *at all.*" This with him appears to be sufficient reason, why marriage should be peculiarly subject to *canon law*—the dogmas of the church. But could the violation, I would ask, of any of the ten commandments become general and there be a church? Which commandment is it, the "supervision" of which is not given the church, in order "to preserve her own existence?" The proposition then is defective or erroneous:

1. In the exceptions made to the just authority of church and state, both of subjects and cases:

2. In the omission and implied exclusion of heads of families. We may soon find reason to fear that this was not done by accident.

3. In point of distinctness. No boundaries are assigned to either of the powers named. No division line between their respective jurisdictions is drawn. No example of the proper or improper exercise of power by either is attempted to be offered. What does he think of the examples to this effect in "*CHURCH AND STATE*?" Would it be convenient for him to recollect them? and to accept or reject each of them pointedly? for reasons explicitly stated?

4. The want of an avowed object. To what purpose is it asserted in

this formal manner, that authority is committed to church and state, unless some one is known to dispute it!

5. The pravity of the real object apparent. It is to assert a special guardianship, or "supervision of the church over the relations and duties implied in the seventh precept, more than over any other of the second table. This proceeds from the error of making marriage a religious covenant, and is calculated to prove the precedency of the church's power in this matter to that of the state. Both the *first* and *third* propositions would virtually, in the spirit of them, transfer the seventh precept from the *second* to the *first* table of the moral law. Where it stands, it defines certain duties between man and man. Where his principles would place it, it would define duties of which God is the immediate object, and of which the church has a special "supervision."

"PROP. 4. These two parties, both church and state, have a right to know every purpose of marriage, a sufficient time before its execution, to prevent it if it should be illegal. If the preceding proposition is admitted, this one cannot be refused." Yet it is easy to show reason why the preceding proposition, loaded as it is with errors, may be admitted, and this one refused. The civil and ecclesiastical powers have, it is true, *authority* to judge of every purpose of marriage, whether it be legal or not. But this judgment they have a *right* to give, on all purposes of marriage previous to the act, as on all purposes of any other action, *specifically*, not *individually*. They give their judgment specifically, by pointing out what kinds of marriage, with respect to age, consanguinity, affinity, and the like—are lawful, and what are unlawful. They give their judgment on cases, including the purpose of them individually, by declaring the marriage of a certain couple—A and B—to be unlawful. This latter mode of judging they have a right to use only after the action, or some voluntary and overt act, indicating the design of a bad action. For the higher powers to extort from men, by inquisition, a confession of their *designs*, in order to judge of them, implies either an impeachment of their designs, as being bad, or of their moral faculties as being incapable of discerning between good and evil. All men have a right to be reputed innocent till guilt be proven; and to be exempt from arrest, libel and inquisition, till probable evidence or suspicious conduct appear to inculcate them. This is the only legitimate mode of administering justice. It is dictated by the light of nature, and sanctioned by the Spirit of God. Ex. xviii. 20. *Thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.* Executive officers are then appointed to take cognizance of the violation of these laws. But were our author's system of prevention to prevail,—and he gives a number of examples to shew its general application, as he thinks, to all cases, including that of marriage; then all laws but one—that of publication—would be superceded. Every purpose of the human heart must be arraigned at the bar of the public tribunals, to be judged of there, before it be executed. Human accountability for every act but one—the neglect of publication—will in a great measure be done away. The burden, at least, of human responsibility, will lie upon the officers. But then Jethro's prudent advice, which God has sanctioned, will lose at least one half of its advantage—which was to diminish the number of causes, by laws prescriptive of moral and civil duty. Then Moses and his officers may sit day and night to try *purposes*, till they *will surely wear away both themselves and all this people that is with them.*

But for the satisfaction of all candid persons, and such I know there are on both sides of the controversy, let the question be fairly stated.

1. It is not the *expediency* of the *state's* making a rule of publication in certain cases; as for example, when one or both the parties are unknown: nor is it the expediency in times of general confusion and danger, of extending this rule to all cases, that is now questioned. Legislatures often lay such restrictions on the use of men's natural rights, for the good of the whole; but without pretending any antecedent and universal moral obligation. Thus the natural right to remove from place to place, may be restricted in case of an invasion or seige, and by the watchmen of cities in untimely hours of the night. Josh. vi. 1. Song. v. 7.

2. It is not the *expediency* of the *church's* making, upon similar grounds, a rule of this kind for her own members, not excepting magistrates, in the act of being married, which is here questioned. Nor is the duty here questioned, of people's submitting in practice to a rule thus limited—although they do not see it to be expedient—provided they are not required to acknowledge in it any divine appointment, that is, in the language of the *SYNOD OF DORT*, provided it be not imposed in such a manner, as to restrict and tie down the conscience. The expediency of the church's interfering so far, in a matter of natural right, and of a civil nature, is, I think very questionable. Yet it may be admitted with perfect safety to my argument. If the author of the Reasons then only meant by "the right to know the purpose," a right to institute a law to this effect—this might have been admitted. But he speaks of "a moral obligation," and one "that lies on church and state to require this previous knowledge."

3. The question is not, whether marriage, in its own nature, be public, and whether marriage, formed without the knowledge of either of those powers—church and state—ought to be prohibited. For we also assert, that in an organized state of society, every marriage ought of *divine right*, to be celebrated before a competent number of witnesses, of whom it is expedient, and when by law required, *necessary*, that some officer appointed by the state, if not also by the church, be one; and that it ought of *divine right*, immediately upon celebration, to be confessed before the church and state, which is sufficiently done by the report of such officer.

It is this one principle then, labored after painfully in the three first propositions of the Reasons, drawn into view awkwardly in the three next, and abandoned, we shall soon see, in the seventh, as untenable—it is the doctrine of the antecedent moral obligation—the doctrine of the *divine right*, of the rule of publication, which I do here *impugn*. The question is, whether publication, as opposed to the license required in any of these states, be of moral obligation, in all ordinary cases, suppose no rule for it were by man enacted?

The main argument with the author of the Reasons, for the moral obligation of the practice prior to any human enactment of a rule for it, is, the right of the public authorities to require previous information. In order to make the argument bear on the question, he must mean the right to require publication. This right, therefore, it is plainly his duty to prove, and then to show that this right implies a moral obligation to exercise it in all ordinary cases. He has not taken the trouble to do either of these. This right, to a certain extent, has been admitted in our statement of the question. But he claims it, without proof, to every extent necessary to his argument. Then, instead of showing that the moral obligation is implied in the right, or that it necessarily flows from it, he assumes this, and so confounds right with duty. The right to make and enforce a rule in some cases, he confounds with the duty of making and enforcing it in all cases. Congress have a right to declare war. Therefore it is their duty to be always declaring war. For the same reasons, it is the duty of parents to be always correcting their chil-

dren. But, "They have a right to do it, because they owe it to God in duty, who has entrusted them with the administration of his laws, and this obligation is the very foundation of the right." But the same language holds equally good for the perpetual declaration of war, and for the incessant plying of the rod. The question however is, whether this obligation to God is an obligation to be perpetually engaged in these actions, or only an obligation to exercise discretion, and to act when there is a providential call? The author assumes the former without proof. I might do the same in behalf of Congress, or of parents, in the cases above stated. The argument from the right to do a thing, to the duty of doing it, is an inconsequent—a *non-sequitur*. The conclusion does not flow from the premises. But the author helps this argument mightily, by begging the question manfully. He takes for granted, that there is a moral obligation to require publication in *all cases*. And upon this moral obligation to require it, he *founds* the right to require it. And from the right to require it, he *infers* the moral obligation. He not only begs the question, but likewise reasons in a circle, as if to repay what he had borrowed. The reader will please to look at the proposition itself, with its illustrations. "They have a right to know—." Then in the next paragraph but one, "Another inference is—a moral obligation." And a few lines below, "This obligation is the very foundation of the right." The argument in full would run thus:—Church and state are under moral obligation to require publication in every case. This obligation creates a right. Wherefore they have a right to require it. But how do we know that they are under such a moral obligation? Ans. It has just been proved that they have a right to require it. This right can only be founded on a moral obligation to require it. Wherefore "an inference is—a moral obligation" to require it. Nor is this argument a light one with our author, or one which the Reasons can very well spare. It is the life and soul of the *fourth proposition*, as that is the soul and centre of the *perfect seven*. But to support the fact of a moral obligation, which in the proposition itself he had begged or assumed, as if evident, and not possibly to be "refused"—he adduces one other argument. It is adduced indirectly, as being only an auxiliary, and is implied in a multitude of examples, all supposed to bear on the same point. The unnamed, and undefined argument, which no doubt is familiar to the minds of many readers, is in substance this: *Publication, as practised in the Associate and some other churches, is a necessary means of preventing illegal marriages.* But the *necessity* of any thing as a means, implies its *sufficiency*, either by itself, or in connection with other means. If this practice be made to appear either insufficient or unnecessary, the argument—drawn from the supposed necessity of it—falls. Or if it be unnecessary in ordinary cases, and insufficient in those which are not, the argument falls. Now it is plain that publication in ordinary cases, is not necessary to prevent illegal marriages. In such cases, the persons to be married are known, and their parents' consent, if they be under age, or (non sui juris,) not at their own just disposal, is likewise known—without publication. These are the only particulars requisite to be known in order to prevent illegal marriages: the character of the parties and the consent of parents. Are they single persons? and not too nearly conjoined already, by affinity or consanguinity? Marriage, I maintain, to be a public fact. Birth to be the same. Both these facts are, in all ordinary cases, to be known by certificate, verbal or written. So is the consent of parents. And no wise and conscientious officer will depend on less than this—will depend on mere publication for his knowledge of the parties' right, or of the parent's consent. Now as all the impediments which can render a marriage *illegal*, which can authorise either church or state to prohibit it,

must arise from one of these three—birth, producing consanguinity, some previous marriage, or the want of parents' consent; and all these particulars being, in ordinary cases, determined with more ease, *accuracy* and despatch by certificate than by publication, it clearly, follows—publication is not in ordinary cases a necessary means of preventing illegal marriages. A previous promise of one person to marry another, will not authorise either church or state to compel the marriage, or to prohibit the delinquent party from marrying to another person than the one promised. The church may censure for making a rash promise, or for breaking a good one; it is not for them to decide which of these two is in this instance the sin committed. The state may award pecuniary compensation to the injured person, and by this, or other means, inflict a merited penalty on the injurious. Further than this, neither the duty of the public authority, nor the interest of the injured, require or permit them to proceed.

But again, in cases which are not ordinary, and where the requisite information cannot be obtained by certificates, it is less satisfactorily obtained by publication. It were possible for a man of general acquaintance in these states to be published in one of our largest congregations, according to rule, and *married* nominally, having other wives in different parts of the Union. And what if the congregation were small? What if he were an obscure person? or had come from a foreign country? The efficiency of the measure would in that case be less. The resort which some have in this part of the discussion is, to beg the question. "We should observe the appointment, and leave the event to God." This is an excellent course, I agree, when we *have* a divine appointment. But in this case they take it for granted that it has a divine appointment, and so no matter about its sufficiency. And yet they prove the divine appointment from its supposed sufficiency. The argument of the author, which we are now considering, is, that this rule is necessary. This implies that it is sufficient. When it is shown to be unnecessary in common cases, and insufficient in others, the whole argument for this divine appointment falls. Another resort is to *mistake* the question. "If it do good in some cases, it should be observed for the sake of those." This may prove that it is expedient to make such a rule, or, if made, to retain it in use as a human expedient. But this "*may do good sometimes*," affords but lame evidence of a divine appointment. Such proof will not be admitted for,—"*Thus saith the Lord*,"—in other matters, by persons of sound principles. Temperance societies may do good sometimes,—therefore they are of divine appointment. Synods should pass an act to censure every person who will not join them. And then every magistrate should be censured who "countenances" any person in not joining them, and who will not be "*a terror*" to such as "*evil doers*."

The whole fabric of the divine right of publication is based upon this fallacy:—That for a minister, or his precentor, to tell a couple's purpose to his hearers, or even to his elders, however few, provided it be done on the meeting ground, makes the fact of marriage a legal fact, both to church and state—although such fact may never take place—and if it do, may take place in private: but that, upon the other hand, the failure to tell the purpose on the meeting ground, makes the fact of marriage clandestine both to church and state, although it be publicly and officially solemnized. I may take occasion hereafter to show that this, besides being an abuse of the word clandestine, is a departure from the customs and language, both of the Ancients and of the Reformers. In order to obviate the exposure of such a fallacy as above stated, the author runs himself into a greater difficulty, and thus exposes it the more. "To tell a public officer, either in church or state, is not to tell either church or

state." But we have been accustomed to believe, that to tell a thing to the church, is to lodge information of it with the officers of the church. Matth. xviii. 17. Yet my views accord with the author's, that such a mode of *telling* will not prevent illegal marriages. He was aware, that to make his argument valid—to make publication a sufficient means of preventing one man from marrying another's wife—to make it as good a means as personal knowledge or certificate—it ought to be to all and every one in the nation. Therefore, instead of the *authorities* plainly referred to in the language of the proposition, who *have a right to prevent*, he now substitutes "the community." But whether it be the "community," in their "primary and conjunct capacity," and so met in general *convention*, or only the populace in town and country, we are not so explicitly informed. I must at all events contend in my turn, that neither his congregation nor mine, is in any sense the community; and that to tell a purpose to them, is not to tell the community. This purpose, if either party be a foreigner, ought likewise to be known to all and every person in the "community" from which such party may have come. This is the author's first *inference* from his proposition; and I feel happy in acknowledging, for once, the clearness and fairness of his induction. "An inference from this is, that this previous knowledge of the purpose of marriage ought to be given to all to whom it may concern, because for them chiefly it is necessary." It ought to be given to all—to every body—in the community of which either party is or has been a member, before it can be, with any probability, known "whom it does concern, and for whom chiefly it is necessary." This inference is fairly inducted from the proposition. If the one be true, so is the other. If the latter be false, so is the former. But the latter is an impossibility. At least it might employ a single precentor more than three sabbaths. It would employ him more in all cases which are not ordinary—in all cases where satisfactory evidence by word or writing cannot be had—in all cases which seem to require publication. And this destroys the last refuge of this moral obligation and divine right. The rule must be content with the honor of being called a human expedient.

The author thinks it "were ridiculous and absurd to assert, that the magistrate had authority to punish the incendiary for burning my house to the ground, but none to hinder him from kindling it." But it would be more ridiculous and absurd for him to call upon *the powers that be*, to compel me, and all his neighbors, to proclaim our purpose, before we kindle any fire, lest the kindling be illegal, and may burn his house—to *the ground*. "The punishment of the man who entices my wife to marry him, is a small matter to me, after my peace and comfort *is* ruined forever." But besides what is shown above, that the fact of another marriage remaining undissolved, being a public fact, needs better means than publication to decide it; no woman of common understanding can, by the idea of a pretended marriage, be enticed to commit adultery, who is not enticed already. The preventive, I should apprehend, in this case, comes too late for the true husband's peace and comfort. The pretended marriage is not the principal crime, and is punishable rather as an imposition on the public confidence. But in this and similar examples, sometimes adduced, the idea cherished is, that persons bent upon the basest crimes, will be stupid enough, if required by law, to proclaim it beforehand. His other examples are still more foreign to the point. The instalment of a pastor is effected by a religious covenant, in which the congregation is a party, and therefore have a right to know, in time to make up their mind. In a decree of divorce, a former covenant is to be rescinded, and the absent party being known to be a party, has a right to object upon good reason shown. Goods imported or exported, have not

to be published, but the invoice reported to the proper officer only—and that only because a special law has made it requisite. The question is, whether the higher powers are under moral obligation to lay a *perpetual* law of revenue, non-intercourse, or embargo, upon marriages? The insolvent debtor is *reasonably* supposed to have more creditors than one. The deceased man is *reasonably* supposed to have creditors, debtors and heirs. Besides, the property cannot be sold without buyers, and an advertisement is the best means of inviting them. In every sale or conveyance of land, absent persons, who are interested, have their rights secured by proclamation. They know to have recourse from any part of the earth, by their agent or otherwise, to the newspaper of the county where their lands, which never migrate, are “being and situate.” If these matters had not been in the *RELIGIOUS MONITOR*, I had not troubled the religious reader with an answer of them. The requiring of a license to be taken, is the requiring of a certificate, if the parties be under age, of their parents’ consent; and the implied right to any thing more, unless it be, in singular cases, another certificate of relationship, or reputed single state in the places where the party is best known—is imaginary.

PROP. 5 differs but little from the preceding. I do most cordially agree with our author, that “The word of God uniformly recognizes in parents a power to give or not to give their children in marriage.” That is, in case of giving, only with the children’s consent. For I hold further, which is the doctrine of Protestants against Papists, that marriages of minors without the consent of their parents, are in their own nature *voidable* by the will of the parents. Num. xxx. 3—5. Ex. xxii. 17. It is the uniform tenor of both Testaments, that parents, *and they only*, have authority over their children, to give or not to give in marriage. And this is direct proof against the pretended moral obligation to ask the consent of church and state. Deut. vii. 3. 1 Cor. vii. 38. Nor can there be a “secret let” to a parent’s giving in marriage that son or daughter who has always been in his power. But the author contradicts himself, and the Bible, and the law of nature, in saying that the authority of natural parents is “included in that of the civil and ecclesiastic.” If it be included in it, it may be controlled by it. And he says that “church and state have a greater authority over us, and a greater interest at stake!” Is this author a father? if he be, he would resist such an encroachment on parental right, *even unto blood*. How the right of the parties in other respects may be known has been shown already. Wherefore, to give or not to give children with their own consent, the other party having equal right to receive, is the natural and unalienable right of him who is the parent by nature or adoption—a right with which no power between heaven and earth may interfere. The claim to know and solemnize the fact of marriage is no exception. And the moment this right passes from the parent, it passes over and becomes vested in the person of the child, for whom alone the parent held it guarded, and there it rests immoveable till marriage or death, uncontrollable either by church or state. One exception, of a very limited extent, was made by the judicial law, which shows the rule to be now confirmed without exception. Num. xxxvi. 6. If this *including* authority of church and state be once established, and our author shall have achieved the reformation on hands, he has still another in contemplation. He has discovered that the Bible “limits in marrying to those making the same profession of religion.” But to the honor of christianity be it spoken, no denomination of Christians of whom I have read ancient or modern, have limited their members, in marrying, to those of their own profession—except some sects of the German Anabaptists—not all those sects, not the modern Baptists. Those Anabaptists to whom I allude, BERNHARDINUS DE

Moon calls the more rigid excommunicators. A member marrying one who was not of their sect, was excommunicated, and not received again, even upon repentance, till the person of extraneous profession, either became converted or died.*

PROP. 7th is in substance, that magistrates should be censured for celebrating a marriage without previous publication. It professes to be built upon the foregoing propositions, particularly this principle:—"That persons thus marrying neglect God's mind and will, violate his ordinance on this head." It professes to be built upon the divine "ordinance" of publication. If so, the proposition has been shown to be without foundation, and I might here close the disputation. But the author appears himself to have distrusted this foundation, and so resorts to another. And not only so, he abandons the *divine right*, as if untenable, and betakes himself *exclusively* to the fifth commandment, and under it to the supposed authority of the church to make a law of publication. "Again the respect of the conduct of which she takes cognizance, in this case, is not the civil or magistratical, but the moral respect of it only, viz: his countenancing the parties whom he marries in a breach of the fifth commandment." Now what is meant *by taking cognizance of the respect of a thing abstractly*, I question if any man can tell. But the "magistratical countenancing" of the breach of the *fifth*, or of any other commandment, I should think censurable. He, it would appear, does not. Be this as it may, the fifth commandment is the only one for the violation of which censure is in this case to be inflicted. And this violation on the magistrate's part, is not *direct*, but *by implication*. He "only countenances the parties" in a violation. The parties are under a *direct* obligation from the fifth commandment, to be published. But the magistrate is under no such direct obligation from this, or any other commandment. His language must mean this, or nothing. But the fifth commandment always interposes a medium between itself and its subject. This medium in the present instance cannot be the state. No command from that source has been given. And even to ask *advice* concerning one's *match* of those who have already declined to give advice on such matters further than what is contained in the statute book, is not to honor but to insult them. It is to the church that we must turn our eye to descry the source whence this mandate or obligation for the proclamation of purposes emanates. The author aids us *a little* in exploring the church's archives for a copy of this mandate, by naming "discipline worship and doctrine." In the worship it cannot be. He has not yet asserted that publication is an ordinance of worship. In the doctrine it cannot be: for if it were a sin against sound doctrine, it would be strange to describe it as "a breach of the fifth commandment *only*." It must be in the *Discipline* of the church, that he holds the magistrate of our communion pledged to observe this rule. And moreover he agrees with me, and every reader of common sense, that the rule in the Directory was made for ministers and the parties to be married; that the rule in the new Book of Discipline was made for the parties, but includes ministers by referring to the Directory. He agrees with me that the magistrate, if he violate this rule by marrying a couple on licence, violates it "only by countenancing the parties." Now, if the parties do not belong to our church, and the rule be, as we have shown, and as this author undesignedly here admits, but a little after *designedly*, for arguments sake—"matter and form," a thing indifferent in its nature—then these parties not being under the rule, cannot break it—consequently the magistrate cannot be countenancing them in breaking it.

But in the case of the parties, one or both belonging to the Associate

* Hornbeck, Summa Controv. Lib. v. p. 387.

church, and marrying upon license, and thus, under present circumstances, *violating sinfully* the rules of their own church—is the Seceder magistrate who marries them guilty of countenancing this breach of the fifth commandment? The author of the Reasons affirms, “Although the previous publication of the purpose of marriage were ‘matter and form’ of it, a thing indifferent, I do not see that the church is under any obligation to surrender it to the state.” He does not see that the church should refrain from censuring the magistrate for not enforcing the rule. This is all that he has been asked to see. And he had said under PROP. 6, “In his magisterial capacity he is bound, as being a ‘terror to evil doers,’ to require that it be done.” What *terror*, besides debarring men and women their natural right to marriage, must, by the magistrate, be impended over their head, for neglect of church rule, in a thing indifferent, is a secret yet to be developed. But this is one terror too much for our testimony to bear. The simple reply to the charge of countenancing is this: The magistrate, in the distribution and protection of men’s natural rights, is not justly chargeable with the countenancing of any deed which he has no just authority to suppress. He is not justly chargeable with the countenancing of false worship, by protecting the persons, liberties and rights of the worshippers, in the very act of false worship. Because, he has no right nor authority to punish them, nor to withhold his protection. Much less has he any just authority to withhold from persons their natural rights, because they reach for them, *schismatically*, over the enacted rule or ceremony of some church. He has no authority, in his distribution of men’s natural rights, to distinguish between those who are breaking church rules, and those who observe them. “The magistrate, as such, has nothing to do with religion. His whole duty as a magistrate respects men, not as Christians, but as members of civil society. He ought not to punish any as *heretics or schismatics*.” The neglect of publication, were it even a divine appointment, yet not being of the essence of marriage, is at worst a heresy. The neglect of a church rule, the matter and form of which are indifferent, is a sin of schism only. And whether the *terror* inflicted be positive, or negative, there is nothing in this sin to punish but schism only: unless she “take cognizance of the respect of the conduct *abstractly*,” the “*terror*” of which, I suppose, would not be very alarming.

“And moreover,” say *Answers to various Reasons of Dissent*, “as the whole institution and end of their office are cut out by, and lie within the compass of, natural principles, it were absurd to suppose that there could, or ought to be, any exercise thereof toward its end, in the foresaid circumstances, but what can be argued for and defended from natural principles; as indeed there is nothing especially allotted and allowed unto magistrates by the word of God, and the Confessions of the Reformed churches, but what can be so.” Can the refusal of marriage to any, whose natural right to it is otherwise good and sure, merely for their neglect of a church rule, in a thing indifferent, “be argued for and defended from natural principles?” If it can, let us have the argument distinctly written. And further, let the duty, the universal moral obligation, of being published be argued for, and defended from, natural principles, *without begging the question, without arguing in a circle*, independent of ecclesiastic canons, and we will all agree that it is the duty of magistrates to enforce it. We will admit that it is the duty of state legislatures in all cases, to make laws to enforce it. We *may*, too, admit that our members, belonging to any of those legislatures, are censurable, for not using their endeavours to obtain laws to this effect. It would still be unjust to censure an executive officer for not enforcing a moral precept, which the Legislature gave him no power to enforce. It would be un-

just to debar him from office, because the laws did not authorise him to enforce all the duties of the two tables. He is not debarred, by secession principles and practice, for want of power to enforce the observance of the Sabbath, or to guard the sanctity of the divine name. He says, under PROP. 4, "It would be a fallacious mode of reasoning to say, that because the state did not expressly require it, therefore it forbids the magistrate (viz. the executive,) to require this previous knowledge,"—publication, as opposed to license. But it would be extremely "fallacious" and contrary to the principles of just government, to say any thing different or contrary. The power and duty of the executive is, and in natural justice *ought to be, defined and limited*, by the constitution and laws. Beyond these he has no right nor authority to act, let the thing to be acted be, in itself, right or wrong. If these enjoin anything sinful in its nature, it is duty not to accept of office, or if he have accepted to resign. But the marrying of a couple, whose right is known, is not rendered sinful in its nature by the neglect of publication, were it even of divine appointment. For the sin would in that case lie, not in the act of being married, but in the previous act, the neglect of the divine appointment. Upon any other principle, every moral defect in our constitution and laws would exclude every christian man from office, and from acting as juror. And *be it so*, I expect to hear this author say, as our brethren the Reformed have long ago said, with more consistency. But *no verily*, is the voice of our testimony—the voice of every genuine Seceder. A man may swear to support the constitution and laws, notwithstanding their moral defects, but with nothing immoral. And if he execute these to their full extent according to the power vested in him by the same, the sins of omission are not his, but the body-politic's, or the Legislature's. For an executive officer to proceed further, and to assume power not vested in him by the constitution and laws, is to assume power not vested in him by "We the People"—and therefore not vested in him by God. This great moral person, "We the People," is the only medium of divine appointment, through which political power flows from God the Most High to any individual man. If they withhold any portion of that power which they ought to transmit, the sin lies at their door.

Conclusion.—"Because if it is indifferent, it has, at least, nothing contrary to the moral law, and therefore it cannot stand in the way of any moral duty of the state functionary." Answer. It is a moral duty, we have repeatedly shown, of the state functionary, to dispense to men all their natural rights, even to heretics and schismatics. The observance of the rule indifferent to them, but the enforcement of it is not so to him. The sin lies here in the usurpation of power not conferred by the God of government.

1. The magistrate usurps a power not conferred on him through the only medium of divine appointment, the constitution and laws.

2. He usurps the power of punishing men as heretics and schismatics, and of having, as a magistrate, to do with religion, by enforcing church rules, the duty of observing or enforcing which is not cut out by and lying within the compass of natural principles.

3. The church usurps the power of ruling an act of administration purely civil, and of making the magistrate her rod, to enforce her enactments in things, the matter and form of which are indifferent.

4. She at the same time usurps the power of censuring and casting out of the church those who cannot, for the fear of the Almighty, be the instruments of inflicting on others her unscriptural censures.

The author's modesty in this affair is remarkable. He would not have the church to strike any man with a weapon which is not in her hand—an armed man with a weapon which might provoke resentment. "She inflicts

no pains or penalties, no civil disabilities, nothing—nothing but a spiritual censure, suspending him from sealing ordinances.” Then the prayer—the body of which can only be construed as an *anathema*—the conclusion of it literally is *maranatha*. But of such thunderbolts I had rather be the object than the instrument. The magistrate has no right, according to our testimony, to compel men to worship God in the way of his own appointments. He must dispense to them all their natural rights in the very act of violating those appointments. And yet it seems he *must* and *shall* compel them to follow church rules in a thing indifferent, and withhold one of the most unalienable rights of man till they comply. And the church shall compel her subordinates to compel him to compel them to follow these church rules, by “grasping firmly” the sword which has lost much of its edge by the Reformation—an unscriptural anathema. “And *second*, because the state is not the church’s father and mother, that she should owe this deference to the state.” The church, he thinks, may compel every person except her “father and mother,” to do what she pleases, provided it be not intrinsically evil. Is this a good rule in other cases? If the author of the Reasons be not my “father and mother,” have I a right to compel him to do what I please, provided it be not intrinsically evil? The fifth commandment recognizes the relation of equals.

J. A.

ART. II. On Divine Love.

(Continued from Vol. IX.)

CONTEMPLATION III. PART I.

7. He vanquished our enemies. These are numerous, powerful, and combined to prevent us from the enjoyment of God and all happiness. It is delightful to contemplate how he began and proceeded against them in *order*, conquering and to conquer.

He rescued human nature from the guilt, defilement and dominion of sin, by his incarnation. As he was not represented in the covenant of works, he had no imputed guilt. His human nature was formed and sanctified by the Holy Ghost. Hence called “that holy thing.” In opposition to all the wickedness of the age in which he lived, he maintained his purity through life. “He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,” though he lived among and conversed with them. They could not convince him of sin; and lastly, He put away sin *radically* and *meritoriously*, by the sacrifice of himself. “He finished transgression, and made an end of sin.” This was beyond the capacity of all mankind. “What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh,” (the impossibility of the law) God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us,” (first in him as our surety, and then in us, by a mystical union to him as “the Lord our righteousness,”) and we ought to *evidence* this, by walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” “He overcame the world,” as he told the disciples. He maintained the truth and purity of the doctrine, from the holy scriptures, as to the divinity of his person and his mission, as the promised Messiah. “Saith he, “If ye believed Moses, ye would believe me, for he spoke of me.” Gen. iii. 15. Deut. xvii. 18. He explained the moral law, in all its spirituality, purity, extent, and perfection, and thus rescued it from the false and gross interpretations put upon it by the Scribes and Pharisees, as was observed in a preceding particular. And when he was repeatedly attacked through life, he made full

proof of his ministry. When "the Pharisees and Herodians took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk, they asked him, Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? He saith, show me the tribute money: and they brought unto him a penny. He saith unto them, whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them, Render, therefore, unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's. When they heard these words, they marvelled and left him, and went their way." When the Sadducees asked him whose wife the woman should be at the resurrection, whom the seven brethren successively had married, "Jesus answered, ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living;" i. e. their bodies must be raised, and soul and body united, that he might be the God of the *whole person*. "And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine."

"In us, the *soul* is not now a *person*, as having never had any separate or distinct subsistence, but the soul in union with the body makes a person; at death the *soul* becomes a *person*, as a separate or distinct rational agent; at the resurrection the soul will be no longer a person by itself, but only the soul and body reunited, to continue so forever."*

To proceed: "When Jesus asked the Pharisees, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, the son of David. He saith unto them, If David call him Lord, how is he his Son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions." In fine, it appears from his whole history, that he never failed to *defeat* the adversaries to the truth. He was always ready to give an *answer*, or a *πολογία*, an apology. It signifies a courage, not only to tell the truth, but to tell the grounds we go upon. In this Christ is our example, and he was always victorious. And then, none could blame his carriage: *that* was the law repeated in life, and practice. Never had God's *authority* more deference, or his *holiness* a better revival. "The prince of this world could find nothing in him." Nay, he confessed, "Thou art the *Holy One* of God."

Lastly—As to the riches, honors and grandeur of this world, our dearest Lord chose a lot much different from that which is most admired. For "he made himself of no reputation, and he took upon him the form of a servant." He *emptied* himself of that which we endeavor to *fill* with. Indeed, *his person* was always great, being the son of God; *his errand* was no way mean, the recovery of a lost race; the life that he *came from* was that of eternal blessedness; the end of his undertaking, was to fetch up the sons of men *thither*. His *heavenly attendance* declared a majesty. Nothing looked contemptible about him, but the meanness of his appearance, and the miseries that he underwent. The angel proclaimed both his *dignity* and *lowliness*, with the same breath, to the shepherds. "To you is born a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a *sign* unto you." A very unlikely *sign* indeed. "Ye shall find the *babe* wrapped in swaddling clothes, [rags agreeably to the original] lying in a *manger*." His poverty through life and his death upon the cross, occasioned the unbelief and slight of the world. "He was a root out of a dry ground. He had no form or comeliness in him;

* Gib's Sacred Contemplations, p. 80.

and when we saw him, there was no beauty that we should desire him. He was despised of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. They hid their faces from him; he was despised and they esteemed him not."

But he *dignified* a state of poverty, and made it glorious. "Had the riches of this world been as necessary as our corrupted reason imagines, can we suppose the great God would have sent forth his son a beggar? If Christ's heart had been set upon them, he might easily have commanded the keys of nature's treasure. But he neglected the abundance and swill of riches. He dishonored that which we call reputation, by laying it aside." "He hid not his face from shame and spitting." "This consideration should give us a coolness in the pursuit of worldly riches. They were none of Christ's entertainments. They were always *beneath* him. He lived and died without them. Nay, they are not the servants of his glory in heaven. They are quite discarded things. 'He has received power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.' But there is nothing sensual about him. There is *no earth* in his throne and grandeur that is both impure and dying. 'Silver and gold' are called 'corruptible things,' they must wear and tarnish. But whatever belongs to a Mediator's court is nothing akin to death; eternally removed from all decay and pollution.' 'Nothing enters thither that defileth.'"*

He vanquished Satan. This he promised in paradise. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent." That is, in the style of the gospel, "The prince of this world shall be judged." Accordingly, when he was baptized, "Then he was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil." And there he defeated him, by "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," as is recorded by the Evangelist, Matth. v. 1—11. He also repeatedly overcame him afterwards, by casting him out of the persons he possessed. The devils were struck with terror at his appearance, "Saying, let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy one of God." But the complete victory was accomplished on the cross. Whilst he was hurried to his trial, and insulted there, he tells the priests, "this is your hour and power of darkness;" and one would think that their victory continued to the last of his pains upon the cross, when they derided him in these words, "He saved others, himself he cannot save." But it was quite otherwise. He was then a conqueror; "having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them on his cross." The majesty of his torments was admired in heaven, and felt in hell; for "through death he subdued him that had the power of death, that is the devil." Of that hour he says, "Now is the prince of this world cast out." In that day he began to save his people; as he "bare their iniquities," so he crushed their enemy. His death was a *satisfaction* and a *victory*. "He delivered them who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bandage."

He unstinged death in dying and triumphed over the grave in his resurrection. "Death was swallowed up in victory." He rose as the representative of his people. "Christ is risen as the first fruits of them that sleep, every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits, and they that are Christ's at his coming." As there is a twofold death, so there is a twofold resurrection. There is a resurrection, (i. e. regeneration,) that precedes the first death, which secures against the second death, that fol-

lows the second resurrection. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power."

Here it is proper to observe, how the other persons *concurred* with the Son, in his obtaining all this victory. Saith the Father, "With him my hand shall be established, mine arm shall also strengthen him." And saith the Son himself, "The Lord God will help me; therefore I shall not be confounded." Again, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, [i. e. my body in the grave,] nor suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Accordingly, "God raised him from the dead and gave him glory." Lastly: He "through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God." Nay, his body was preserved from corruption; and "quickened by the Spirit."

8. The ascension of Christ into heaven, in the *nature* and *name* of his people, is another *evidence* of his love. Thus he said to Mary, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." To deny the truth of his resurrection and ascension, is to reject the most *certain history*, and blaspheme against the *greatest goodness*. To the disciples "he showed himself alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." And he said unto them, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be *witnesses* unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight." This completed his acceptance, as it showed what he had done and suffered was equal to the design upon which he submitted to it. Thus he had a title to the reward. "After he had offered one sacrifice for sin, he forever sat down at the right hand of God." This also secured the salvation of his people. His making the atonement is the grand foundation of the covenant, and this appeared when he was received up into glory. "As concerning that he raised him from the dead, no more to see corruption, he saith in this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David." Thus the covenant comes to be ratified with believers. "By his own blood he entered *once* [for all] into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." And of this he gave plentiful evidence, by sending down the Holy Ghost; which showed his great interest above, and his constant care about the church which he left behind him. "He being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received the promise of the Father, hath shed forth *that* which ye see and hear." They saw the cloven tongues of fire, and heard the disciples speak all languages. The apostle would not have them to consider it barely as a wonder or sign from heaven, but as the consequence of an agreement there. Christ went thither with a demand: he used to tell them, "Till I go away the comforter cannot come, but if I go, I will send him to you." As if the apostle had said, "We cannot tell what became of him after the cloud received him out of sight, but he hath taken a sure way to show us that his entrance above was not in vain; he hath sent down the promise of the Father he used to talk of, and it is from that *grant* that he supplies this dispensation." They might think that his going away would leave them desolate. But they rather received a divine presence than lost one; for when he sent down the Holy Ghost, it was "that God the Lord might dwell among them." Lastly: The ascension of Christ was an evidence of love to his people, because he went into heaven as a *forerunner*, and to make all things ready for their reception. "If [seeing] I go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am ye may be also." "It is heaven to be where Christ is. His presence below makes heaven on earth; his

presence above makes heaven in perfection,"—as a great divine observed.* He will fulfil his promise. "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise *before*. Then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with *them* in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall be ever with the Lord." Here again observe the *concurrence* of the Father in the ascension of Christ. It was, "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, who raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenlies." And as after his resurrection, "through the Holy Ghost, he gave commandment unto the apostles," so it was from that fullness with which he ascended, that the Spirit was sent down to supply the want of his personal presence.

9. The intercession of Christ in heaven is another *evidence* of love to his people. The love that he expressed by his blood on the cross, went up to the kingdom with him. Isaiah describes the manner of his procedure. "He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

The privilege of having an advocate is what the Christian cannot do without. You may as well rob him of his *heaven* as of his *Jesus*. He has nothing but what he receives from a throne of grace; no way of going there but by prayer; no access but by a mediator. Nay, "he cannot order his speech by reason of darkness." But "we have an advocate with the Father." He possesseth his existence in a perpetual activity. "He ever liveth to make intercession." And "as the memorials of his death are within view, he cannot fail in any petition. Every wound is an argument that carries success along with it. He is no common pleader. His interest is well grounded. His Father denies him nothing. His throne is a place of requests. There is a mixture of petition and authority in his language. It is petition as it is directed to a superior; and authority, as he claims no more than his due." "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given be with me." And what a great number is contained in this happy roll! "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Therefore, let us trust our cause with him, and make room for "hope and peace in believing."

Thus, we have contemplated these acts of Christ's love to his people, displayed in what he *did* and yet *doth* for them. We should now proceed, secondly, to contemplate *other acts* of his love manifested in what *he gives to them*. And this is no less than all the blessings of salvation, as he himself saith, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." As he purchased them at the expense of his blood and agony upon the cross, and pleads them within the vail, so he has the honor of dispensing them from his throne. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins."

Here again we might wander at large in *another field of love*. We might contemplate Christ quickening his people when they "are dead in trespasses and sin." He gave them spiritual light. And, "there is none teacheth like him." He is exalted to give forgiveness. "He washeth his people from their sins in his own blood." He giveth strength for all the duties and trials of life. He is the consolation of Israel. They are "the preserved in Christ Jesus, and called." They "are more than conquerors through him that loved them." And, lastly, he saith, "I will give unto them eternal life."

* Prof. William Moncrief, Aloo, Scotland.

These observations we shall not illustrate any farther at present, because, first, we have limited this contemplation *principally* to those acts of Christ's love which are *personal*, and in which the Father and the Spirit only *concur*, as has been proved. Whereas, secondly, these blessings which we have mentioned are represented in scripture as conferred by *each* person in the Godhead. Sometimes by one, sometimes by another, which proves that each person is God.* And, lastly, we shall have occasion to illustrate the preceding evidences of Christ's love, when we come to contemplate the love of the Spirit displayed in applying our salvation. We shall therefore conclude this branch of the subject, by subjoining three evidences of Christ's love, which are *peculiar* to *himself*, but not to the *exclusion* of the other persons.

1. He will judge the world. "The Father judgeth no man, [i. e. personally,] but hath committed all judgment to the Son," Nay, "he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world by *that man*," viz. Christ Jesus. Here it is necessary to observe, in opposition to the *Socinians* and *Unitarians*, that the order and process of that day supposes those capacities that a *creature* cannot have. There must be *omniscience* to "search the hearts and try the reins of the children of men;" an infinite *purity*, there is "none holy as the Lord, there is none beside him, he is a God of judgment, and by him actions are weighed." Infinite *power* to execute the sentence. "The wicked shall go into everlasting punishment; the righteous into life eternal." There must also be an *eternity* in the person who tries the world, for when "the judgment is set, and the books opened, the Ancient of days will be seen, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom." These perfections are inseparable from him who judges the world in righteousness, and therefore "God is Judge himself: the heavens will declare his righteousness, and all men shall see his glory." And yet all this our Saviour has declared to be his own. "HE will *then* be glorified in his saints, and admired in them that believe." So that this shall be a time of love, and a day of complete salvation to Christ's redeemed people.

2. Though Christ said to the disciples, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom: and the Psalmist saith, "the good Spirit shall lead us to the land of uprightness," yet the Son himself will give the kind invitation." Then shall the *King* say unto them on his right hand, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

3. In heaven, the Son *alone* will be visible, and display his love to his people, by *personally* conferring upon them all the pleasures of paradise. "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." But this is not to the *exclusion* of the other persons, for "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." And as expressive of the consolations of the Holy Ghost—"There is a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb." Then these delightful words of the Psalmist will receive a complete accomplishment—"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light." We might now mention some of the distinguished properties, and excellencies of Christ's love. But as it is proposed to make these the subject of the next Contemplation, we conclude by observing in general—How *extensive* and *delightful* a subject is the love of Christ! Saith one, "The proofs of Christ's

* The reader will find this *proposition* illustrated and confirmed in the Religious Monitor, Sept. No. 1830, pp. 201, 202. Also more fully, Sept. No. 1831, pp. 201—212.

love reach back to the first Adam, and forward to the last of his sons. It extends to all the redeemed from among men in every period of the world: nor is it confined to time, but reaches to eternity itself. He showed it in one eternity, proved it particularly in time, and it will be displayed and admired forever. We cannot in any respect comprehend this love. It is without beginning and without end. Some evidences of it we can contemplate and enjoy. But when we begin to trace it to eternity past, or forward to eternity to come, and proceed on in our views, as far as we can, it is like a great and pleasant river, which hides its head in unknown regions!"

(To be Continued.)

ART. III. *Extract from a work soon to be published, which is to be entitled "Helps to Christian Devotion, consisting of Dissertations on the Psalms."*

PSALM II. Translation.

1. Why do the heathen rage, and the people meditate vain things?
2. The kings of the earth seat themselves in council, and the rulers deliberate together,—against Jehovah,—and against his anointed!
3. "Let us break asunder their bands, and cast away from us their cords."
4. He that sits in the Heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision.
5. Then shall he speak to them in anger; and in his wrath he shall terrify them.
6. But I have anointed my king upon Zion, the hill of my holiness.
7. I will declare the decree. Jehovah hath said to me; thou art my son; I, this day, have begotten thee.
8. Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance; and the ends of the earth for thy possession.
9. Thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them to pieces as the vessel of the potter.
10. And now, ye kings, be wise; be instructed, ye judges of the earth.
11. Serve this Jehovah in fear; and rejoice in trembling.
12. Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all who wait for him.

DISSERTATION.—The apostles, Peter and John, having healed a man who was lame from his birth; and the miracle having come to the knowledge of the Jewish rulers; while the apostles were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them. They were grieved that they taught the people, and preached, through Jesus, the resurrection from the dead. But, not daring to bring any accusation against them, for fear of the people, they called them and commanded them not to speak at all, nor teach, in the name of Jesus. But when they had permitted them to depart they came to the place where their own company had assembled, and they informed them how they had been treated by the chief priests and elders. It is said, "when they heard that, they lifted their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, who hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is; who by the mouth of thy servant David, hast said: Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things; the kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together—against the Lord, and against his Christ." By a proper degree of attention to this interesting fact, we may have some knowledge of the meaning of this exclamation: Why do the heathen rage? &c.

The word which is rendered heathen, represents that part of mankind, who are either ignorant of the gospel, or continue in opposition to it, after they have heard it preached. In a large and comprehensive sense, it means the inhabitants of those countries, which have never been enlightened by the gospel; and in a more particular and limited sense, it means those who show by their lives and conversation, that they have not received the principles of Christianity into their hearts; and that they do not yield obedience to God, according to his gospel. So the Psalmist, in the lix. Psalm, prays for deliverance from his persecutors, and calls them heathen; although he evidently means Saul and his agents, who were endeavoring to destroy him. It is mentioned in the title, that this Psalm was composed at that time, when they watched the house to kill him. He declares "they lie in wait for my soul. They run and prepare themselves without my fault. Thou, therefore, O Lord God of Hosts, the God of Israel, awake to visit all the heathen: be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. But thou, O Lord, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision." We are, therefore, to understand by the word heathen, or Gentiles, or nations, as it is here used by the Psalmist, all those who, in heathen or Christian lands, are ignorant or regardless of the gospel; or who still continue in opposition to the principles, or the practice of true Christianity. When we see the various efforts, which are made in the present time, to prevent the operation and advancement of the pure principles of the gospel, and the pure worship which God has ap-

pointed, from being practised by those to whom God has sent it: when false worship is introduced, and a false gospel preached, instead of the true gospel of Christ; and when we compare the facts before us, with the facts which are stated in the Acts of the Apostles; we may see clearly what we are to understand by this exclamation of the Psalmist. The heathen still rage, and the people still meditate vain things; whenever the leading truths of the gospel are presented to their minds, in such a way as to command their attention.

As in this particular example we are to understand by the heathen, or nations and people, with the kings and rulers of the earth, Herod and Pontius Pilate, the gentiles and the people of Israel; so in all other cases where opposition is made to the true gospel, we shall find that the opposition is made by the very same sort of characters; although they have the name of Christians. Herod was the king of the Jews, and professed to be a worshipper of the true God; the Jews made the same profession, and attended to his worship with the most scrupulous formality: even Pontius Pilate professed to have a great regard for truth and righteousness. All that diligently observe the course of life, which is pursued by men who are called Christians, and men called infidels, will find that there is a striking similarity, between their conduct, and that of the Jews and Romans, in the days of the apostles. They rage, and they imagine vain things; for while they seat themselves in council, and deliberate against Jehovah, and against his Messiah, they are gathered together, to do whatsoever his hand and council determined before to be done. They are fulfilling the designs of God, while it is their great object to oppose them, and prevent them from being fulfilled.

The Psalmist here presents to us the language of the hearts of such characters. They say in their hearts, let us break asunder their bands, &c. All that receive the Lord Jesus Christ in truth, must receive him not only as their prophet and priest; but they must receive him as their king. They must put themselves under his government, that he may rule in them as well as over them. The bands and yokes of the Redeemer, are the bands and yokes of the Father. He draws his people to his Son; and he puts his yoke upon them. It is true that his commandments are not grievous. His yoke is easy, and his burden light. But it is grievous and heavy to the man whose affections are set on the present life. He commands us not to love the world, nor the things that are in the world, not to be solicitous concerning what we shall eat, what we shall drink, and wherewithal we shall be clothed; but to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and to rely on his promise, that all temporal things, which are suitable and necessary, shall be given to us in the proper time. But the worldly minded man cannot bear this constraint. The great object of his solicitude is the things of this world; and so great is his eagerness to obtain them, that to be commanded to set his affections on other objects, not only gives him pain; but excites a kind of rebellious disposition in his heart. Then he takes some means to free himself from these bonds and yokes, which are attempted to be put upon him, contrary to his inclinations. Hence men that have the same feelings and dispositions on this subject, will unite in the same work, and use the same language of encouragement the one to the other. Various and numerous are the means and efforts and contrivances, which men have adopted for this purpose; and they are chiefly directed against him, whom the Father has commanded angels and men to worship. Herod and Pontius Pilate, the Jews and the Gentiles, at the time when Christ rose from the dead, assumed his authority, and was about to send his gospel over the world, exerted themselves with all their power, aided and directed by the power of Satan, to break asunder the bands, and cast away the yokes of the Redeemer. But they succeeded no better than the builders of Babel in ancient times. They thought to exalt their own power above the power of the Almighty. They attempted to build a city and a tower, whose top might reach to heaven, that they might have a centre of union, where they should gather together against the Lord, and against his anointed. In that period they were less guilty than they are at this time, because the true character of the Lord Jesus Christ was not clearly revealed. But such is the enmity of the human heart, against Jehovah and against his Messiah, that carnal men always become the more hostile, as the truth is more clearly revealed. In the days of Herod and Pontius Pilate, the power of the Messiah appeared to be so small, that the feelings of enmity in the hearts of many, were mingled with contempt; and for years and ages after those days, the gospel was suffered to grow, because men did not generally see, that the reigning religion would be endangered by its influence: but as soon as this truth began to appear, then the sword of persecution was unsheathed, and the venom of the dragon appeared, in all the efforts of the heathen to destroy the Christian name. But so soon as Christianity obtained power, and the name of Christian became a title of respect and honor, then anti-christ arose, under the outward resemblance of Christianity; the dragon gave his power unto the beast; Satan put on the robes of an angel of light; the man of sin seated himself in the temple of God, and set his throne close by the throne of the Most High. This is the spiritual condition of the world at the present time. Hypocrisy prevails under the outward appearance of Christianity, and the great mass of the Christian world, have a name that they live while they are dead. Thus men still say in their hearts, concerning the Redeemer, we will not have this man to reign over us: and they say, one to another, let us break his bands asunder; and cast away from us his yokes.

This kind of feeling and disposition is in all mankind by nature; for the carnal mind is enmity against God; and this carnal mind is never utterly destroyed in us, so long as we remain in this world. But it is by submitting to Christ, believing in Christ, and trusting in Christ continually, that we receive power to conquer our own evil dispositions, and to gain the victory over the world, the flesh and the devil. The power of evil is so strong, both in our hearts, and in the world around us, that nothing less than the constant operation of the power of Christ, can deliver us from the dominion of sin, even after we are made willing in the day of his power. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that we cannot do the things which we would." When we delight in the law of God after the inward man, we still find a law in our members, warring

against the law of our minds. This evil principle will operate to prevent us from submitting entirely to the law of Christ. It operates in the Christian by means of darkness and deception, and he can find it only by the application of the light of truth. Hence he frequently exclaims with the Psalmist, "who can understand his errors?" All Christians, therefore, have reason to examine themselves constantly and carefully, lest they should act like the rest of mankind, in breaking and casting away the bands and yokes of the Redeemer.

Still it must appear evident to every one, on mature deliberation, that all the efforts of man against his Maker, are like the efforts of a venomous reptile, to injure those who have power to destroy it, or to inflict upon it, whatever pain they may think proper. We are here told, that there is some such feeling in the mind of the Almighty, when he beholds the evil dispositions, and the malignant efforts of sinful men, against the authority and government of his only begotten Son. He that sits in the heavens shall laugh, &c. When we speak of the laughter and derision, or of the anger and rage of the Almighty; we should keep in mind his high and holy nature and character. There can be nothing in his laughter that is degrading, and nothing in his anger, which would give us any reason to think, that his mind could be ruffled by the same passions which agitate the human bosom. When Herod and Pilate, with the Jewish and Gentile populace, exerted themselves to destroy the Redeemer; and made him suffer death on the cross; or when the rulers of mankind at the present time, and those whom they have under their authority, exert themselves in various ways, against the Redeemer and his cause; he beholds their works, and is able at any time by an exertion of his power, to confound their counsels, and cover them with confusion. Therefore the laughter, which is here ascribed to Jehovah, is the perfect tranquility of his mind, when he considers that all the efforts of his enemies, are as harmless as the efforts of a worm against the foot that treads upon it.

But as men have in them the malignity and the poison of the serpent, and by this evil disposition, their actions are directed and regulated; so God looks with displeasure on their evil works: and as these evil works are directed against his authority and government; so he determines in his justice, to punish them for their iniquities, and to put them under his feet. As God is known by the judgments which he executes; so we may have some knowledge of his feelings of anger against transgressors, by the sufferings which follow many transgressions. The wrath of God is the steady determination, which he keeps in his heart, to punish every sin to the uttermost. It is no pleasure to him to bring misery upon any one, for he does not willingly afflict, nor grieve the children of men; but he has determined to execute judgment righteously; and the sin of rebellion against the government of his only begotten Son, is the most presumptuously wicked of all the wicked actions of men. Those, therefore, who are guilty of this sin, shall be reprov'd in his anger, and terrified in his indignation.

The dreadful vengeance which he inflicted on the Jews, after they had condemned and crucified the Redeemer, may give us some knowledge of the terrible nature of his wrath. The object which the Jews had in view, in the perpetration of this wicked work, was to free themselves from his yoke. But instead of gaining their object, they were cast down into the chains of darkness and despair. They suffered horrible punishments in this world, and too many of them in death, gave mournful evidence that their names were not written with the righteous. As it is one of the chief subjects proposed to us by the Redeemer, for our rejoicing, that our names are written in heaven; so it is, and ought to be, the cause of most horrible pain and terror to men, when they have reason to fear, that they shall die in their sins, and be the objects of God's displeasure for ever.

It appears, from the history of creation and providence, as it is presented to us in the word of God, that the principal object, which God the Father had in view in all his works, in this world, and in all his works among the angels, was to honor his only begotten Son. Hence, the Apostle declares, concerning the salvation of those whom he had chosen to everlasting life, "whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." Man was created in the image of God, but having lost that image by his fall and apostacy; so all those who shall be saved, are predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God. As the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part of the same. He took flesh and blood, and thus united the human with the divine nature. Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross; and, therefore, God the Father has exalted him, and given him a name, which is above every name. We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. This is therefore the great cause, why God honors and blesses a part of the human family. His great object is to render most blessed and glorious, him who was with him through eternity, as one who was brought up by him, and whose delights were with the sons of men.

The Father is here represented, as making this proclamation to heaven and earth, to angels and men, that he had honored his only begotten Son, by committing into his hand the government of earth and heaven, until that period, when all things should be subdued unto him, and his enemies should be made his footstool. The commencement of this kingdom was publicly made on Mount Zion, where the temple was built. From this place the gospel began to be proclaimed, the knowledge of Christ to be extended, and his kingdom to be established. The Father, therefore, proclaims: I have anointed my king upon Zion, &c. As David and Solomon, and the kings of Israel, were anointed on Mount Zion; so Jesus Christ, the spiritual or true David, was anointed king over the universe, but especially over the Israel of God. As Zion was consecrated to God for a holy place, among the hills or eminences, which were in, and round about Jerusalem; and was the particular place where his holy people assembled to worship him; so the assemblages of Christian worshippers are his house, his temple and his holy place. There is now no place upon the earth more holy than another. Therefore the Redeemer said to the woman of Samaria, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. But the hour cometh, and is, when the true

worshippers, shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. Jesus Christ is anointed the sovereign or king, over all the assemblages of Christian worshippers, and is the head of his church, which is his body, the fullness of him who filleth all in all.

The Psalmist in the next place represents this King of Zion, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, as making his proclamation to the kings of the earth and to mankind. It might be proper for us in this place, to look back for a moment, over the arrangements of this sublime, and wonderful piece of divine composition. In the first place, the nations and people of the earth, appear to be assembled together in rage and tumult. Then ten thousand vain imaginations enter into their minds; like those who framed the project of the building of Babel. The kings and rulers and judges sit together in deliberation; and the chief subject appears to be, how they shall be able to free themselves and the world from the government of him, whom God the Father has exalted in human nature, to be the Prince and the Saviour.

Again, the great God of heaven, the Father and Lord of the universe, is represented as looking down upon mankind, and viewing their evil imaginations and works of wickedness, with contempt and indignation. Then he confounds their language, and throws them all into confusion; and while they look forward fearfully to the judgment, and fiery indignation, by which they are threatened, and by which their hearts are filled with terror, they call to the rocks to fall upon them, and to the hills to cover them, from the vengeance of the Most High: For he speaks to them in anger and terrifies them in his wrath.

But there is hope for the human family, by the reception of the gospel, and the acknowledgment of willing subjection, to the King of kings. Therefore, that confusion might cease, and all things be settled in proper order, the Father proclaims to the universe, that he had anointed his King, and placed him on Zion, his holy hill. Then this King comes forward, and reveals to mankind the substance of his Father's annunciation. He proclaims the eternal decree of God, or the covenant into which he had entered with his Father, before time began, and in which all nations were promised to him for his inheritance; and he concludes with an address, in his Father's name, to the kings and judges of the earth, and to all mankind, to submit to his authority, receive his instruction, and enjoy his protection, and the blessings of his kingdom.

The persons of the Godhead are eternal. There are three distinct subsistences in the one Jehovah, and each of these subsistences is Jehovah. They are not called Father, Son and Holy Spirit, from the relation which they bear to mankind in the gospel; but from the relation in which they stand to each other. If the universe had never been brought into existence, Jehovah, the Father, Son and Spirit, would have been as he is, the same Jehovah. We may also observe, that the Godhead in each of the persons is invisible. No man hath seen God at any time. It is true that God can render himself visible to man, by putting on any appearances he pleases, and he appeared to Moses as a flame of fire in a bush. But the Son of God has taken human nature as his permanent residence or dwelling place. He dwells in human flesh. His human body and his human soul, are thus united with the Godhead. His human nature is not only the dwelling place for his divine nature; but the Father dwells in him, and he manifests the Godhead to his people. We come to him that we may come to the Father; because the Father is in him, and he in the Father; and it is he who makes known the Father to us.

When the Father makes this declaration to him, "thou art my Son, this day I have begotten thee;" he simply declares a fact which exists at this moment, which has existed from eternity, and will exist forever. No new relation is here established among the persons of the Godhead. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and forever; and there can be no change in the other persons of the Godhead. There is only this difference with respect to the human nature of Christ, which was declared to Mary by the angel; "that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God."

We may here know something of the force of the epithet, wonderful, which is so often applied to the Son of God in the scripture. Thus, when Manoah enquired of the angel, who appeared to him and told him, that he should have a son, he asked: what is thy name, that when thy saying cometh to pass, we may do thee honor: he said, why dost thou ask after my name, seeing it is secret; or as it ought to have been rendered; seeing it is wonderful. Thus also said Isaiah; unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called wonderful. And thus says the Apostle, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh!

Hence as this personage, who on account of his eminence is called wonderful, is the mighty God,—God manifested in the flesh, so it is plain, that he has the very nature of Jehovah. In this nature there can be no degrees. It is one and the same in each of the three persons. Jehovah is the self-existent God; he who is, and was, and is to come, the Almighty. But there is the distinction of authority. The Father has authority over the Son, and the Spirit, for he sends them both into the world, as he sends the angels. He gives his command, and they obey; and the Holy Spirit obeys both the Father and the Son. But the great difference which exists between God and all other beings, is that of the Creator and the creatures. The Creator is eternal, and possesses all the divine attributes; while the creature was brought into existence by his power, and is limited in all his faculties. But the Son of God is the Creator of all worlds, and the heir of all things. He is not only the Creator of all things, but they are his property; for the Father has given them into his hands, and constituted him the Governor of all worlds; and especially the Governor of all the nations of the earth. All things were made by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. He is head over all things, or governs all things for the good of the church. It is plain that this Sonship and procession from the Father, is not and cannot be the same in every thing, with the Sonship and procession, which exists among mankind. God is infinitely above us. It is impossible for

us to understand how the Son can be always begotten, and always proceeding from the Father; and how all this can come to pass by an eternal decree. The word which is rendered decree, signifies something which is marked out, or portrayed or delineated, in a conspicuous manner. The Son is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image or character, or engraving, of his person. The Father, therefore, decreed from eternity, that the Son should always proceed from him, and be his representative; and the Sonship of Christ, in his divine nature was eternal as the decree was eternal. As the sun and the stars began to shine, or the rays of light were emitted from them, when they began to exist; so Christ was the brightness of his Father's glory from eternity. This is, therefore, the declaration, or rather the revelation of a fact, which is true at the present moment, which has existed forever, and will forever be the same. The Father has said to the Redeemer from eternity, thou art my son, this day I have begotten thee, and he now says to the world; this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him. He is always begotten, because he is always in the bosom of the Father, and always proceeds from him.

Jesus Christ is therefore very properly called Wonderful, as to his divine nature; and he is no less wonderful, as to his human nature, in union with the divine. It is very true, that in the fullest and most exalted sense of the terms, his human nature never can be called the Son of God, because the human is essentially below the divine nature, and can never rise so high in the scale of excellence as to be altogether equal to it: yet the Holy Ghost declared, that the holy thing which was to be born of the virgin, should be called the Son of God. Adam was called the son of God, because he was created in the image of God; but the human nature of Jesus Christ, is the Son of God in a much higher sense; because the eternal and only begotten Son of God, has chosen to make this human nature his eternal residence. Therefore as the body of Christ will be glorious beyond all our comprehension; so his soul will transcend in its faculties, of feeling and understanding, all the souls of the children of Adam. "He is fairer than the sons of men; grace is poured into his lips; and God has blessed him forever." In this sense he is the chief among ten thousand; yea, he is altogether lovely. The Apostle also declares, in the Epistle to the Romans, that Jesus Christ was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Since, therefore, Jesus Christ, as to his human nature, is declared to be the Son of God with power; and as this human nature is, by the excellence of its faculties, the beauty of its form, and by every other created excellence, constantly partaking of the communicable attributes of God; so in this sense also, God the Father says to him, thou art my Son; this day I have begotten thee.

In this sense every Christian may sing this sentiment in application to himself. "The children of God are born, not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but of God." They are born of water, and of the Spirit; or by the outward means, and by the inward operation of the divine power in their hearts. They are born, not of corruptible, but of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. But regeneration is the commencement of the work of holiness. When God begins this good work in the heart, then every virtue and every grace, is communicated in the proper time. "His divine power bestows on his people, all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him, who has called them to glory and virtue." By faith in the exceeding great and precious promises of the gospel, they become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Therefore in this sense God says to all his people, as well as to his only begotten Son, ye are my sons, this day I have begotten you. He has begotten them to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven, for those who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation. This is the way in which we ought to apply such sentiments, to the Captain of our salvation, and to ourselves, as far as they are applicable.

This Psalm was written by David, and is therefore in a certain sense, applicable to David. God said to him, as he said to every one that is regenerated: "thou art my son, this day I have begotten thee." But David was, in his person, in many of his works, and in his kingdom, a remarkable type, or figure, or symbol of the Son of God. No figure taken from man, can fully represent the whole person of Christ, for as his divine nature cannot be represented to the eye of man, so it cannot by any symbol be fully represented to the human mind. But as David was raised from an humble condition in the world, and was anointed by the command of God, to be the king of a great and powerful nation; and the temple and the city of David stood on Mount Zion; so God said to David, in a certain sense, I have anointed thee my king, upon Zion, the hill of my holiness. Ask of me, &c. The kingdom of Israel was, after years of trial and dangers and painful exertions, finally given into his hand; and he reigned over the whole nation. He acquired authority during his life, over many of the heathen nations around the kingdom of Israel, and the reign of Solomon, his son, extended from the river Euphrates to the Mediterranean Sea. So the promise was in a certain sense fulfilled in Solomon; "he shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth."

But in the person and works of the Redeemer, in the propagation of his gospel, and in the establishment of his kingdom, we may see and realise the truth of all these typical representations. As it is declared by the Apostle John, the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ; so we may say, the promise was fulfilled outwardly to David, but inwardly and spiritually it was fulfilled, and is still in the course of being fulfilled, to the Redeemer. It is necessary for us to keep the truth always in our minds, that all things belong to the Father. He has authority over all, and he has authority over his only begotten Son. In this sense, as well as with respect to his human nature, the Redeemer declares the Father is greater than I. Jesus Christ is Jehovah, and has the same nature with his Father; but he was always under the Father's authority. He obeys his commands, and he receives blessings from his hand. He asks, and receives; he seeks and finds; he knocks and it is opened to him. But when we take into

view the human nature of Christ, the kindness and condescension of the Father appears more clearly to our minds. When he recognizes the Redeemer as his son, both in the divine and human nature, and knowing that his delights were always with the sons of men, he anticipates his wishes, and promises to give him on his asking, all nations for his inheritance, the ends of the earth for his possession.

As the Father intends to support his authority over all, so he shows this determination in the very honors which he bestows upon his son. It is necessary, even for the Son of God, to ask and to receive from his Father, whatever blessings or honors he wishes and hopes to enjoy. This asking is not merely a particular request, but a continued prayer. God says to all his children, as Christ said to his disciples, ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened. It is only he that asks, who has any right to hope for any blessing from the hand of God. Prayer is an exercise of so much importance, in the eyes of the Father, that his only begotten Son is still in the habit of prayer. There is something always which he desires and asks from his Father. He stands at the right hand of God, and makes intercession for all that come to God through him. But one of the chief and most important requests, which the Redeemer makes to his Father, is that all the nations of the earth should be brought into subjection to him; that all Kings should fall down before him; and all nations should serve him; that he should not only be virtually, but by universal acknowledgment, the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

He has had his request always in some degree granted to him. A part of the human family has been given into his hand, from generation to generation. The Lord's portion is his people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness: he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. This is in fact the condition in a spiritual point of view, in which the Redeemer finds all his people, who are given into his hand to be redeemed. In the ancient ages, they were only to be found in one nation; and the rest of the world were suffered to walk in their own ways, and to choose their own deceptions. But he led his own people like a flock of sheep, by the hand of Moses and Aaron, and other leaders whom he provided for them. It was the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour, who led them, and there was no strange God with him. It is necessary that the Redeemer should lead his people through trouble, and that he should humble them and try them: but when they are sufficiently humbled, so as to be able to bear prosperity with a righteous and humble disposition, then he raises them to honor and comforts, and gives them reason to praise him. He has promised, that they shall delight themselves in the Lord, and he will cause them to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed them with the heritage of Jacob their father. He causes their light to rise from obscurity, and their darkness to be as the noon day. He guides them continually, and satisfies their soul in drought, and makes them like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. This is the way in which the Captain of our Salvation leads all who are given into his hand by the Father. He whose delights are with the sons of men, finds increasing delight in filling the hearts of his people with spiritual food and gladness, as soon as they are prepared and fitted to receive it. This is his portion and his inheritance among mankind, and he thus prepares a people among whom he shall dwell forever.

But the Father has promised, that the people whom the Redeemer forms for himself, and who shall shew forth his praise, shall not only be collected from other nations, besides the Jews; but in the latter ages, all nations shall serve him, and his churches shall be purified, so that his worshippers shall generally be righteous characters. Professing Christians, who live in any sinful practices, shall be cast out of the church, and finally destroyed from the earth. Therefore says the prophet: "awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." The true gospel shall have free course and be glorified, and all those who will not submit to the Redeemer, shall finally be cut off. For God says, "the nation and kingdom which will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." "Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever; the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."

The Apostle declares, that the rulers of the church watch for the souls of those under their care, as they that must give account. If therefore they should have reason to believe, that the people under their care were generally righteous characters; they would then be able in their prayers, to give their account in with joy. It would indeed be equal cause of thanksgiving to God, by faithful rulers and overseers of any church or congregation, if they had reason to believe, in the judgment of charity, that those of whom they had the oversight were generally righteous. But this appears plainly to be the meaning of the Father's gracious promise to his son, to give him the earth for his inheritance. Every congregation of worshippers, shall generally be composed of righteous characters; and the inhabited world shall be divided into different congregations. It is said in the book of Deuteronomy; "when the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance; when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." The meaning of this declaration, which now seems obscure, will be fully developed in that time, when the Most High shall divide to the nations their spiritual inheritance in the gospel, and when the sons of Adam shall be separated merely into different congregations of worshippers. Then it shall come to pass, according to the words of the prophet, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountain, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

The Father has commanded his only begotten Son to ask him continually for this invaluable blessing; or to make it the subject of his prayers. He asks only for such things as he believes and knows to be agreeable to the will of his Father. But the Father has taught him to pray that the nations may all be given to him for his inheritance; and the Redeemer has taught us

to make our request for the same blessing. It is all comprehended in the petitions, thy kingdom come; and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. We know that it is the will of his Father, to give the kingdom into his hand. "The riches of the Gentiles shall be brought into it. And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. The daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift, even the rich among the people, shall entreat his favor. Yea, he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Saba, prayer also shall be made for him continually, and daily shall he be praised."

This grant of the Father is accompanied with a command, which renders it proper and necessary for the Redeemer to bring the world into subjection, by a course of severe and terrible discipline. A rod of iron can never be supposed to be used by a father for the correction of his children, unless they have become exceedingly refractory,—and even rebellious. This is plainly an emblem of such severe and terrible measures, as a sovereign would use when his subjects had rebelled against him. But the nations of the earth have always showed this rebellious disposition. It has plainly appeared, in all ages and countries, where the government of Christ has been attempted to be established, that mankind would rather be under any other sovereign, than the Son of God. This is the reason why the heathen rage, and why the rulers of the earth sit in council. Their object is to break the yoke of the Redeemer. They do not desire to be under such a government. Indeed there is too much evidence of this lamentable truth, in every country and neighborhood, where the gospel is preached, and the ordinances administered according to the commandments of Christ. The spirit of Antichrist began to work in the minds of men, even in the days of the apostles; and it has continued to increase in power, notwithstanding all the efforts and exertions, which have been made to extend the influence of the gospel. It was the purpose of God, that mankind should be permitted to give full proof of the wickedness of that spirit, which dwells and operates in the human heart. But he declares, by the Apostle Paul, that when that wicked spirit shall be fully developed, and exhibited for the condemnation of the world that lies in wickedness, then the Lord shall consume him, with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy him with the brightness of his coming. Then a terrible series of judgments shall be executed over the face of the earth. These judgments are called the seven last plagues, or the vials of the wrath of God. In these scenes the Redeemer shall rule the nations with a rod of iron, and shall dash them in pieces, as the vessel of the potter.

But although all the chastisements, which shall be inflicted on the children of God, shall have the effect to teach them his laws, and render them more humble and obedient; yet we may learn from many places in scripture, that in these latter days, the judgments of God on his own people, will be more severe than any which they have experienced in former times. In these latter ages the prophecy is to be remarkably fulfilled; "awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die, but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say it is my people; and they shall say, thy Lord is my God." From these declarations of the truth of God, we may learn that there shall be in these latter days, a long series of dreadful judgments, by which the wicked shall be cut off and destroyed in large numbers, and the righteous shall pass through a fiery trial, by which they shall not be destroyed, but their hearts shall be purified. Hence it is said, concerning "the great multitude, who stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands: These are they who came out of great tribulation; and have washed their robes, and made them white, in the blood of the Lamb."

But in the end of all these tribulations, when they shall have passed through these fiery trials, and have come forth like gold, they shall be raised to honor and power among mankind. So it is said concerning the witnesses, whom the Son of God had appointed to prophecy in sackcloth, and afterwards to suffer death, and that their dead bodies should be cast into the streets, for the gratification and triumph of their enemies; they afterwards rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven; and then great fear fell upon them who saw them. So also, it is promised by the Lord Jesus Christ, to the church of Thyatira and to all churches that are placed in similar circumstances, and that walk in the course which he has commanded; contending earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, "to him that overcometh and keepeth my works to the end, I will give him power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of the potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father." Individual Christians, who are placed in these circumstances, may be obliged to endure great tribulation, to lose all the comforts of this world, and even their lives for the sake of the truth: but those who are faithful unto the death, shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. When churches or Christian communities continue faithful, and suffer every kind of pain and indignity, which the enemy can inflict; when they never give up the truth, nor submit with their hearts, to the power of iniquity, they always overcome in the end, and rise into power. The honorable condition, to which the Christian church has arrived in the world, at this present time, shows conclusively the faithfulness of God to his promise. The power to which the protestant churches have arrived, who have contended earnestly and faithfully against the errors and corruptions of the Roman church; this and many examples of particular churches, who have suffered for a time in bearing testimony to the truth, but have afterwards gained the victory and risen to honor, might be adduced, to show that the Redeemer has been abundantly faithful to his promise in times past. But in these latter days, we may hope with confidence, to see the same promise fulfilled, in a striking and remarkable manner, to all the churches who have continued firm in the support of the truth. They shall have power over the nations; their enemies shall melt away

before them, and by the power of their King, who stills the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumults of the populace, they shall be enabled to dissolve and disperse all the combinations of the enemies of the truth, and of the pure worship of God. Like the potter's vessel, they shall break them to shivers.

The foregoing part of this Psalm, is a short but powerful exhibition of truth, showing the sovereign authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the manner in which that authority shall be exercised and supported. The Psalmist therefore concludes with a no less powerful application of the subject, to the leaders and governors of mankind, and through them to the whole world, to induce them to bow in willing subjection, to him who is placed over them by the Father Almighty. By kings and judges that class of mankind is evidently meant, who hold the reins of government, and direct the affairs of nations, cities, villages, and communities, from the largest to the smallest. Even the father of a family, who has children and domestics under his government, is in this sense one of the kings and judges of the earth. All these characters stand in a state of responsibility to the great King and Judge of all. The Father has committed all judgment to the Son, and we must all, even in this world, stand at the judgment seat of Christ, to give an account of the things committed to our charge. Our judgment, or condemnation, will be the more terrible in proportion, to the importance of our official station. Every man, in every station of life, must pass under the inspection of this Sovereign Judge; and therefore it is highly important, that every one should exercise wisdom and receive instruction.

This King, whom they are required to serve, is no other than Jehovah, the Sovereign of the heavens and the earth, and the Creator of all things. "By him," says the apostle, "were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." This is Jesus Christ, the King, whom the Father has set upon Zion, and who claims the government of the universe. The Father has anointed him for this high office, that he might wage war with the powers of darkness, and bruise the head of the serpent. When Eve brought forth her first born son, she exclaimed I have gotten a man from the Lord, or rather, as it ought to be rendered, I have gotten a man, **THE JEHOVAH**. It is the same personage who is here brought into our view. Serve this Jehovah in fear; for he is your Maker, and the great and dreadful God. The fear of him is the beginning of wisdom. We should fear him as we fear the Father, and our religious joy should be mingled with fear. We are commanded to rejoice always in the Lord, but in our rejoicing we should keep in mind his dreadful judgments; and tremble in view of the vengeance, which he will execute on the workers of iniquity.

But this subject is addressed chiefly to those kings and rulers, who sit in council and deliberate together against Jehovah, and against his Messiah. These are all the kings of the earth, and the judges who bear rule over the tribes of the earth. These characters, if they continue to keep their minds fixed on the earth, and regard not the words of this King, shall mourn, when they see and understand his coming to bring terrible judgments upon the earth;—when the fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. They are commanded to tremble in the midst of their profane and earthly joy, and instead of serving themselves and the idols of their own hearts, to serve this Jehovah who is the Son of God.

There is a token of subjection and of willing obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, which in its outward form and correspondent feelings, is in some degree different from the kind of subjection and willing service, which we render to the Father. The kings and judges of the earth are exhorted, to kiss the son, lest he be angry, &c. The meaning of this expression can scarcely be understood, without recurring to the manners and customs of times and countries different from our own. In the ancient ages, all the heathen countries, as well as the Jews believed in saviours, who were in some respects different from the great God. Almost all the household gods, and the gods of particular countries, were of this description. They all believed that the God who made the heavens and the earth, was a higher and more powerful being, than any of the particular and local saviours. This is the subject, which is brought particularly before us, in the xiv. of Isaiah; a part of which we shall translate literally, from the original Hebrew. "Assemble yourselves, and draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations; they have no knowledge, who carry the wood of the graven image, and pray to a god who cannot save. Proclaim, and bring near; yea let them take counsel together; who hath shewed this from ancient times? from this time who hath proclaimed it? am not I Jehovah? and there is yet no God without me; the just God and the Saviour; none except me. Look to me and be saved all the ends of the earth, for I am God and none else. By myself I have sworn, the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that to me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." The meaning of this declaration is explained by the Apostle in Romans xiv. "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, as I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." If we do not bow to him at the present time, we shall be obliged to bow to him as our judge, at the day when all nations shall be assembled before him, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." They who do not look to him as the Saviour, and tremble before him, lest he should be angry, and they should perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little, shall be obliged to look to him and tremble before him, as their Judge, when he shall pronounce the sentence of eternal condemnation on the wicked.

It was customary, among many of the idolaters of ancient times, to kiss the images of their gods. So we are told by Cicero, that the mouth and chin of one of the gods were worn by the kisses of his worshippers. So also it is said, by the prophet Hosea: they say of their idols; "Let the men that sacrifice, kiss the calves." Thus we may learn how the act of kissing began to be considered as an act of worship, which they rendered to their gods and saviours, and also as an act of reverence, to those whom they esteemed and honored as their superiors,

who had a rightful authority over them. When Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, placed Joseph in authority over his kingdom, he said to him thou shalt be over my house, and according to thy word shall all my people be ruled. It is literally rendered, at thy mouth shall all my people kiss. The custom of kissing the idols, or of kissing the hand when they bowed to the idols, as a token of subjection and reverence, had become so common, that it was used in their common language, to signify willing subjection to those who were in power. But Joseph was a type of the son of God. He was called by Pharaoh, Zaphnath Paaneah, that is, one to whom God revealed secret things. The Lord Jesus Christ was sent into the world, to reveal the secret of redeeming grace; and thus the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant. Thus also God the Father said to his son, thou shalt be over my house, and at thy mouth shall all my people kiss; or, they shall all be ruled by thy word.

The love of God which is manifested in the gospel, and the various attributes of God, which ought to excite love in the hearts of men, are exhibited so clearly, that those who do not receive the Redeemer and submit to him, give an evidence no less clear, that they are actuated by some kind of dislike or hatred to that Saviour, whom the Father has placed on the throne, and to whom he commands them to be subject. Hence as this Saviour is the acting governor, and judge of the earth; so this kind of wicked feeling always excites his resentment and indignation. God the Father offers him, and he offers himself to be their Lord, and Saviour; and they reject him, and say we will not have this man to rule over us.

No wonder that the anger of the Redeemer is excited, since he has made such a sacrifice for man, and offers him such invaluable blessings. This kind of conduct proceeds not entirely from ignorance, but hatred; and such characters are really the enemies of Jehovah, and of his Messiah. Hence he looks upon them with anger and withdraws his presence. He says this people errs in their heart, and they have not known my ways. They perish from the way, like the Israelites who fell and died in the wilderness, in which they wandered, and never found the way to the land of Canaan.

There is danger of everlasting ruin in the indulgence of such a disposition. If we do not give ourselves up to him, to be ruled and directed according to his will, his wrath will be kindled against us. We have reason to fear that he will hide his face from us, and then we shall go on frowardly in the way of our own hearts. If there is danger of perishing when his wrath is kindled but a little, it must be a dreadful consideration, to see his wrath burning against us, like the devouring fire on Mount Sinai, when even Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake. If such was the declaration of Moses, when he saw the emblem of the wrath of the Son of God, no wonder the wicked are represented as calling to the rocks to fall upon them, and to the hills to cover them from his vengeance.

Men perish from the way by little and little, as his wrath is kindled. They first begin to neglect their duty occasionally and then give it up entirely. Sorrow is always the consequence of sin. There is a short lived comfort which is placed before them, by way of temptation, and they are led into sin; but sin will always be followed by pain. Sin entered, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. But this sin of refusing submission to the Son of God, if it continues so long as to harden the heart, and provoke his anger, so that he swears in his wrath they shall not enter into my rest, is certain and irremediable and eternal destruction, from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.

The son of God is always presented to us as a Saviour, or deliverer. Pain and sorrow, and woe, are denounced against mankind in the curse of the law of God. But the son offers to be our Saviour; and there is no other name given under heaven among men, by which they can be saved. Without him the curse must come upon all, and by rejecting his offers of salvation, the condemnation is increased beyond all hope. Those therefore who receive him, and trust in him for salvation, are the only characters, who have any right to expect blessings from God. The act, or exercising mind, by which we receive his salvation, is called waiting for him; because his salvation is not sensibly perceived at any particular moment. He is always presented to our mind, as a refuge or protection, and therefore waiting for him, and flying to him for protection, are only different degrees of the same exercise of the believer's heart. His salvation consists in deliverance from all sin, and all sorrow. We wait upon him for this blessing, and we exercise patience, in waiting for his coming to deliver us from evil, and to bestow upon us every other blessing. All those whose hearts are continually acting under the influence of this principle, are in a state of blessedness, which is perfect in its nature, and will always be growing in its degrees, until it reaches the perfect blessedness of the heavens.

ART. IV. *Influence of Arminianism.*

When the doctrine of free-will began to be broached by some who called themselves Protestants, in England, the friends of the Reformation were filled with the greatest alarm. They feared this single doctrine more than all the fires and faggots of Rome. Thence, that holy martyr, Bradford, and others, in their letter on this subject to Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer, express themselves thus:—"The effects of salvation they, (the free-willers, as they were called,) so mingle and confound with the cause, that if it be not seen to, more hurt will come by them than ever

came by the Papists. In free-will they are plain Papists; yea, Pelagians, and ye know that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Were the Pelagian doctrines so signally instrumental in the erection and support of the Anti-christian kingdom? Its earthly superior has discovered the wisdom of the serpent in attempting to 'heal this deadly wound' by the very same means. Even that learned Jesuit, Petavius, acknowledges that the famous Council of Trent was called together to oppose the errors of Calvin, as much as those of Luther. The virulence, and the variety of their decrees, in opposition to the doctrine of grace, plainly shew their full conviction, that this doctrine made the throne of Anti-Christ tremble at its base. Soon after the dawn of the Reformation, appeared Ignatius Loyola, the father of the Jesuits, who exerted himself to the utmost of human power to support this tottering throne. Two great lines appear in the formation of this extraordinary society; blind devotion for the Pope, and unparalleled zeal for free-will and its kindred articles. In consequence of the latter trait in their character, they have not only been the warmest antagonists of all without the pale of their church, but the most bitter enemies of all within it, who have held the opposite doctrine. Thence their unrelenting persecution of the Jansenists in France, who were considered as traitors to the interests of Rome, because of their adherence to the doctrine of grace; although they scornfully disclaimed the name of Calvinists, and were in other respects zealous Catholics. Thence their adversaries could not rest till they got their doctrines condemned as heretical, the leaders of the party deprived, imprisoned or banished, and a decree passed that all, whether clergy or laity, should formally abjure sentiments which threatened the very existence of holy mother church.

As this has been the interior policy of Rome, it may not be improper to attend to her mode of management without her pale. There is every reason to believe, that the publication of Arminian doctrine in the church of England was the result of Jesuitical craft. When Archbishop Laud's papers were examined, a letter was found among them thus endorsed with his own hand: "March, 1625. A Jesuit's letter, sent to the rector of Brudells, about the ensuing Parliament." The design of the letter was to comfort the heart of his superior, who might be apt to fear that the unexpected calling of a Parliament would blast all the schemes formed in England for the restoration of Popery. To shew that there was no reason for despondency, he says:—"We have now many strings to our bow—we have planted that sovereign drug *Arminianism*, which, we hope, will purge the Protestants from their heresy; and it flourisheth and beareth fruit in due season. I am, at this time, transported with joy to see how happily all instruments and means, as well great as lesser, co-operates unto our purposes. But to return unto the *main fabric*, **OUR FOUNDATION IS ARMINIANISM.**"*

Even Heylin, blindly as he was devoted to the ruling party, acknowledges the justness of the statement given by another Jesuit of that age, who expressed himself in the following terms:—"Protestantism waxeth weary of itself. The doctrine is altered in many things for which their progenitors forsook the church (of Rome); as, Limbus patrum; prayer for the dead; the possibility of keeping the commandments of God; and the accounting of CALVINISM to be HERESY at least, if not TREASON."† The learned and judicious Halyburton observes on this subject, that the jealousies of many discerning people were considerably increased, when it was seen with what violence the abettors of this new divinity appeared against the more moderate part of the church of England, as well as the

* Bushworth's Collect. Part 1. Toplady's Calvinism, vol. 1. Introd. p. 38. † Life of Laud.

Dissenters, upon the account of some ceremonies, owned by themselves as indifferent in their own nature; while, at the same time, they expressed a great deal of tenderness, if not respect, to the church of Rome, and made proposals of union with her.*

Here I shall only subjoin the words of an historian. "The churches were adorned with paintings, images, altar-pieces, &c., and, instead of communion tables, altars were set up, and bowings to them, and the sacramental elements enjoined. The predestinarian doctrines were forbidden, not only to be preached, but to be printed; and the Arminian sense of the articles was encouraged and propagated."† Thus Arminianism was introduced as the body of Popery, and a new fleece of superstitious ceremonies as her proper garb.

It is well known to those who are acquainted with the history of the church of Scotland, that the learned and eminently pious Rutherford was, A. D. 1636, banished by the high commission court from his parish; discharged from exercising any part of his ministry in Scotland, under pain of rebellion; and ordered to confine himself within the city of Aberdeen during the king's pleasure, where he continued for more than a year and a half. The principal reason of this tyrannical sentence was, his publishing "*Exercitationes Apologeticæ pro Divina Gratia*." We have his own testimony on this head. "The cause that ripened their hatred was my book against the Arminians, whereof they accused me those three days I appeared before them."‡ He had been summoned to answer for the publication so early as 1630. But as the Archbishop of St. Andrews was prevented by tempestous weather, from being present at the court, and as Mr. Rutherford was befriended by one of the judges, the diet was deserted. This work was supposed to cut the very sinews of Arminianism, which the Jesuits acknowledge to be their *main fabric*; and the court party considered as indispensably necessary for consolidating their system of tyranny both in church and state.

But while the Arminian system ultimately encourages Deism, by its connection with Socinianism and Popery, it at the same time operates more immediately. Arminians inform us, that they do not see how "it can be proved that the belief of any other articles is necessary to salvation, than of those few which are admitted by all who are called Christians."§ They grant that these are few; and according to their limitation, they must be few indeed. The trinity, the incarnation, the atonement, regeneration, justification by faith alone, and all the other great doctrines of revelation are denied. Thus those articles only which respect the perfections of God, will be accounted fundamental. But even these are not left entire. Socinians deny his essential omnipresence, his omniscience, his immutability, his punitive justice. Some of these have been acknowledged by Heathens, and are acknowledged by Deists. But here is a plan of Christianity which releases from the necessity of believing such articles.

The doctrine of Arminians concerning the *Heathen*, has the same tendency. Some of them hold that the Heathen may be saved, if they live according to the light of nature. This is merely a revival of the old Pelagian tenet, that "every one who was sincere in his own religion would be saved." Others do not go so far, but assert, that those who make a right use of the light of nature, entitle themselves to a communication of the light of grace.|| They suppose that God communicates this in a way similar to that in which he deals with children within the pale of the

* Nat. Rel. Insufficient.

† Letters, Ep. 1 p. 1.

|| Turret. Theol. Loc. 1, Qu. 4.

† Tindal's Continuation of Rapin's Hist. vol. 3.

§ Reasonstr. Apolog. ap. Haliburton, p. 23.

church. But as we are not to be "wise above what is written," the language of inspiration must equally limit our charity. We are expressly assured that "where no vision is, there the people perish;" that God will pour his fury upon the Heathen, and on the families or kindreds "that call not on his name." The Ephesians, it may be supposed, were in general no worse than other Heathens. Yet the Apostle affirms, that while without the gospel they had not hope, and were "without God," literally "atheists in the world." For the Spirit of truth, so far from admitting that Heathens may serve the true God, expressly asserts that they know not God, but do service to them that are no gods. He declares, without any limitation, that the "things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God." When human wisdom, aided only by the light of nature, and some faint glimmerings of tradition, had gone to its utmost stretch in the famous schools of Greece and Rome, what estimate did the Spirit of God form of it? That it had brought men nearer to God? The very reverse. "The world by wisdom knew not God." What God may or may not do, in an extraordinary way, we dare not pretend to say, where God himself hath not said it. But we are certain that, as "there is not another name under heaven given among men, by which we can be saved, but the name of Christ;" so the scripture gives us no idea of the salvation of adults, but by the outward means of grace. And with respect to the Heathen, it is expressly said, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? So, then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Besides, this doctrine proceeds upon a false ground. It supposes that heathens may be found, who live according to the law of nature. But scripture asserts the very contrary; that they are "without excuse," that "they are all under sin."

Those who hold this doctrine, which imposes upon many, under the notion of an amiable charity, unwittingly controvert the great evidences, which the Spirit of God hath given of the necessity of a revelation. The Apostle of the Gentiles illustrates the necessity of "the revelation of of the righteousness of God, to faith," from the consideration of his "wrath being revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." This, he applies immediately to the heathen, and primarily, because of their idolatry. Rom. i. 17, 23. It is because there can be no faith without hearing, and no hearing without the word of God, that he introduces that prophetic language with respect to the Ministers of Christ,—*"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring good tidings of good things."* There is not one word in scripture, which exhibits the wisdom of God as procured by that of man, or the grace of Christ as superinduced upon heathen virtue. The one must be renounced as ignorance, and the other as unrighteousness, before God. The revelation of grace is represented, not as giving perfection to human wisdom, but as the remedy provided, in sovereign mercy, for those whom this wisdom hath blinded. "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to naught the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." Did Jesus send the apostles to perfect what heathenism had begun? The commission of Paul runs in a very different strain. He was sent to the Gentiles "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the kingdom of Satan unto God."

This doctrine, how far soever it may be from the design of those who

publish it, has certainly a great tendency to confirm professed Christians in their indifference to the gospel. To declare that sinners may be saved without this revelation of grace, cannot be a cogent motive to the obedience of faith. This is not the way to recommend the great blessing of "knowing the joyful sound." To ascribe as happy an effect to the darkness of heathenism, as to this "marvellous light," may well lull sinners in their eternal security, but will never be the means of awakening them to a due consideration of "the things that belong to their peace." It may make them wish that they had been born pagans, as thus they might have been saved on easier terms. But it will never excite them to bless God that their lot is cast in "the valley of vision." For certainly it is one of the first steps of the gracious operation of the Spirit, deeply to affect the hearts of men with a sense of the "love and kindness of God our Saviour," in favoring them with precious light, without which they must have "sat in darkness, and in the region and shadow of death." Therefore, this charity for the heathen, however specious, bears not one mark of true charity to those who enjoy the gospel. On the contrary, it obscures the wisdom of God in the work of salvation. If men may be saved by faith in a Mahomet, a Confucius, or a Zoroaster, why should not God have spared his own son? Why did he give him up to the death, if men could as certainly obtain eternal life any other way? Under pretence of ascribing the greatest benevolence to God, it denies the peculiar glory of this benevolence. It denies the freedom of its operation. All must indiscriminately partake of it, whether believers in the Son of God, or in the false prophet; whether they have worshipped the true God, or whorshipped devils. According to this doctrine, the grace of the gospel deserves not the name of grace, unless it run in every devious or polluted channel formed by the vanity of the human mind, as certainly and copiously as in that of the blood of the Lamb.

It is easily conceivable that the mind, under this delusive system of charity, may make the most rapid progress to infidelity. We have seen that it necessarily disparages the gospel revelation, and directly tends to strengthen our natural disregard for it, by denying it to be a distinguishing mercy. It also pours contempt upon the great doctrines of faith, and prepares the mind for the rejection of all mysteries in revealed religion. It becomes necessary to explain away the meaning of many passages of scripture, that express the contrary, some of which have been already mentioned. Thus a man is led to "handle the word of God deceitfully." If he find it difficult to avert the force of these, he perhaps entertains a secret disgust at revelation, because it does not so easily bend to his system, as he could wish. He may adhere to it for a while, struggling between its natural meaning, and the contrary dictates of his own mind; conscience secretly whispering the truth, and his perverse will opposing it. But let a temptation enter from another quarter; he will find it an easy matter to quit a religion which seems irreconcilable with his feelings, and at once to embrace a system more perfectly in unison with his boasted liberality.

It has been formerly observed, that writers of the Arminian persuasion have been serviceable to the Church, in illustrating various arguments in defence of revelation. But from the nature of their system, they have necessarily failed as to the principal one.

Arguments of a rational kind, in support of Christianity, may produce a rational faith. But a divine faith can only flow from a view of the divine perfection and authority impressed on the word, and manifesting itself to the soul, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, who indited it. This alone can support the Christian, during the rage of corruption or temptation, when he loses sight of every other argument. Many Armin-

ian writers speak as if the proper ground of faith, in the apostolic age had been the evidence of miracles; and seem to suppose that the great evidence, which we in these later ages, have of the authenticity of scripture, is the testimony of the inspired writers, viewed as men of unexceptionable character. But this faith, whether we consider its immediate object, or its origin, is merely of a human kind; and is essentially different from that which is "of the operation of God."

Undoubtedly, one of the most forcible arguments for the necessity of a revelation, is the depravity of human nature. There are two characters of the christian revelation, which powerfully recommend it as divine; its efficacy in giving the sinner such a display of his spiritual necessities as experience exactly verifies, and its exhibition of a salvation perfectly commensurate to these necessities. Men may be at first shocked at the strong language of scripture in regard to themselves, and endeavour to explain it away as much to the honour of human nature as possible. But if they give due attention to the word, they will find that it not only declares the truth as to what in their situation is too plain to be denied; but that it shows them a spiritual deformity in their hearts and practice, of which they formerly had not the least conception; and discovers this so clearly, that they can no more deny it, than those facts which they learned from the dictates of a natural conscience. They at the same time, perceive that the word of God exhibits a salvation of the very same extent with their greatly varied necessities; that this salvation wants nothing which they need, and that it has nothing superfluous. If, at any time they discover a spiritual disease which was formerly hid, they may be at first, in danger of supposing that their case is unexampled. But eventually, the discovery of this new disease proves only the occasion of their being more fully confirmed in the all-healing efficacy of the divine word.

But according to the Arminian scheme, the force of such reasoning is lost. While those who fairly follow the footsteps of Pelagius, absolutely deny original sin; the substance of his heresy is adopted by Arminians. If, as many of them affirm, man had no occasion for the gracious illumination of the Spirit, in order to a right understanding of the scriptures.* If his will retains an inclination to what is truly and spiritually good, and a power of determining itself to the choice of this; if he can do something to merit justification; the fall has done him no great injury. This view of human depravity will never convince men of the necessity of revelation. It cannot be supposed that Arminians should successfully recommend the word of God, to infidels, as what can alone acquaint them with their spiritual wants; while it costs them such labour and ingenuity to explain away a great variety of passages on this subject, which flatly contradict their system.

Their denial of the sovereignty of God in election, affords a great handle to Deists. The plan can never make revelation in general, more palatable to the carnal mind. For to be consistent, it ought to go a great way farther. By the strong language used against the doctrine of particular election, Arminians only open the way for others, to attack the divine sovereignty, with respect to angels. Is not this perfection of Deity, as much displayed in passing by all "the angels who kept not their first estate," as in the preterition of some of the lost family of Adam? Can it be said, that the one is irreconcilable with infinite justice, without arraigning the same attribute in respect to the other? Arminians admit the election of particular nations to the enjoyment of the means of grace, while they deny that of particular persons to the enjoyment of

* Examen. Armin. p. 53.

grace itself. To countenance this absurdity, they suppose another; a possibility of salvation without these means, that is, a possibility of receiving the grace of God in another way than that to which he hath expressly restricted its operation. But the vanity of this idea has been already considered.

By impartial judges, this denial of particular election can be viewed in no other light than as a tacit crimination of the justice of God, in his conduct towards nations. If the Great Potter hath not a right to make his vessels as he pleases, what right had he to choose the Jews, to the means of salvation, and to leave all other nations to walk in their own ways, without hope, and without God in the world. If we sincerely receive the scriptures ourselves, or wish to recommend them to others, as a divine revelation, we must receive them as they really are, and not reject any doctrine, while we assent to others equally obnoxious to reason as depraved. The sovereignty of God, in commanding the extermination of the nations of Canaan, and in afterwards bearing with the Jews, though they did worse than they, has been still as exceptionable to Deists, as the doctrine of particular election. To admit the one, and deny the other, is to set revelation at variance with itself.

The doctrine of free-will can be of as little service in recommending Christianity to its adversaries. If they judge of the whole system from this pretended specimen, their prejudices must be increased. Many, who acknowledge no revelation, are convinced that the Arminian doctrine on this head, is irreconcilable with philosophy. Reason undoubtedly teaches that, if God give a revelation, it must not only be recommended by the clearest evidence, but be accompanied with such power as to have all that effect which he designed. But while Arminians represent the effect of the outward means, nay, the efficacy of the divine operation, as entirely suspended on the uncertain will of the creature, notwithstanding God's will to save all; instead of exalting revelation, they virtually represent it as a revelation unworthy of God. For its effect must thus be uncertain as to any, and its end must be certainly defeated as to a great part of those whose salvation God meant by it. If there be merely a possibility of salvation to all, there must be at the same time a possibility that not one should be saved. Does not this system supply the enemies of Christianity with an argument against the very duties of religion? For why should I pray to God, for what does not depend on *his* will, but on *my own*? The system called Calvinistic, how much soever it may be objected to in other respects, must be acknowledged to be consistent in this. For as it supposes that God, by the revelation of grace, meant to save some only, it asserts the immutability, of his purpose, and the efficacy of his operation, as to every individual whom he meant to save. While it does not pretend fully to explain the mysterious operation of God, any more than the mystery of his being; it asserts according to scripture, that the natural and essential liberty of the will is nowise impaired in the change accomplished by grace, although this grace is certainly efficacious.—*Dr. Jameison.*

ART. V. *Intelligence from Scotland.*

We understand that the late decision of our Synod, recognizing the Original Seceders in Scotland as one Church with ourselves, has been received by them with the greatest pleasure and satisfaction. It has tended greatly to strengthen their hands and encourage their hearts in the midst of their troubles and misrepresentations, in contending for the principles of the Reformed Church of Scotland, as maintained by the Fathers of the Secession. They consist of thirty ordained ministers, divided into four Presbyteries, viz: Edinburgh, Ayr, Perth, and

Aberdeen. They have five preachers, also a considerable number of students attending the Divinity Hall, under the inspection of the venerable Professor Paxton, whose name must be dear to those who know him, either personally or from his writings; and particularly to such Ministers as received the benefit of his instruction, in their early years; but are now widely scattered, in Scotland, Ireland, and America.

From a Letter lately received, we find one of our brethren saying, "Remember me to any of the staunch friends of Reformation principles, and assure them that though unknown in the face, I feel as present with them in the spirit, and rejoice in their strivings for the faith." Our correspondent, says that he had written to a distinguished individual who is one of the Ministers of the Original Seceders, respecting their sentiments on common benefits being the purchase of Christ, as reports had been industriously circulated to their injury; nothing having been mentioned in their Testimony particularly on that subject. The following answer has been given.

"April 1, 1833.

"You have not mentioned the time at which your Synod meets, and I am afraid a letter sent from our Synod (which is to meet on May 14,) may be too late. As you are anxious to hear from us on a certain point, and I think your anxiety is not without reason, I judge it better to answer your letter without delay. I have no other reason for the omission of an express condemnation, in our Testimony, of the doctrine of Christ's purchasing Common Benefits, (as they are called), but that we did not think it was a prevailing error, and that we thought the Cameronians had dropped that peculiarity. Perhaps we were mistaken as to the fact. My sentiments as to common benefits are the very same with those stated in Gib's Display, and in the American Testimony; and I have every reason to believe that those of *all* my brethren are the very same. It is a point that never was called in question among us, and about which we never felt any difficulty, and never perceived the slightest jarring of sentiment or shade of difference among us. I have heard, indeed, some good honest private Christians among the Anti-Burghers, from my earliest years, occasionally on asking a blessing, beg 'a covenant right to these mercies.' I dare say they used it very innocently, but it is a phrase I never employed."

After giving his sentiments freely on other subjects, he concludes, by saying, "Much allowance must be made for the difficulty which brethren in America feel in obtaining correct information, and their liability to be imposed upon by false reports." This we think should satisfy any candid mind, that the report was not true "that the Original Seceders held the doctrine of common benefits being the purchase of Christ."

The same worthy Father says, "The Churches of England and Ireland are in a tottering state, and that of Scotland is not free of all danger. A considerable number of ministers and members of the latter are making attempts at reform, particularly in getting rid of patronage; but the greater part, including orthodox ministers, will content themselves with propping up the edifice and giving its walls a little white-washing. We live in uncommon times; and who can say what will be the end of these wonders?"

"I shall see that the Synod (or their Committee) write to America after their ensuing meeting. The union with the Original Burghers I do not think will take place soon. It is highly reasonable that our Transatlantic brethren should know the terms before hand; and if the Synod agree to any overture, I have little doubt it will be transmitted to you."

It appears the Rev. Thomas Goodwillie, during his stay in Scotland, has been preaching for Dr. McCrie, Professor Paxton, and others of the same connection; and has been cheerfully received and highly approved of.

We expect more information from the same quarter soon, which we shall lay before our readers. As we have, through the medium of a friend obtained an intelligent correspondent in Edinburgh, and another in Greenock, we shall by and bye be able to enliven our pages with correct Foreign Intelligence, and interesting extracts from the Edinburgh Presbyterian Review, Presbyterian Magazine, Theological Magazine, &c.

ART. VI. General Assembly.

(Continued from page 31.)

WEDNESDAY, May 22, 1833.

The Committee, consisting of Drs. Spring and Hoge, and Messrs. Ludlow, Jessup and Wilkinson, to whom had been referred the complaint of 2d Presbytery of Philadelphia, against the Synod of Philadelphia; the complaint of the Rev. Robert Cathcart, George Duffield, and E. W. Gilbert, against the Synod of Philadelphia; a remonstrance from the Synod of Philadelphia against the division of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, on the principle of elective affinity; a complaint of E. W. Gilbert against the Synod of Philadelphia; and a complaint of the Synod of Cincinnati against the principle of dividing Presbyteries by elective affinity, reported, that they had effected a compromise, and introduced the following resolution, to wit:—

Resolved, That the complainants in these cases have leave to withdraw their complaints; and that the consideration of all the other papers relating to the second Presbytery of Philadelphia be indefinitely postponed.

The report was accepted.

After a long discussion, in which most of the speakers supported the resolution and urged the necessity of restoring peace to the church, while a few urged the Assembly to settle the constitutional questions involved in the several complaints, this resolution was unanimously adopted.

The report was then adopted, the compromise completed, and the papers were all withdrawn.

The moment this was announced from the chair, it was proposed that solemn thanksgiving be rendered to God. The motion was carried as by acclamation; and Dr. Miller thereupon addressed the throne of grace, and returned grateful acknowledgments to the God of Peace.